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AND

SCIENTIFIC OBSERVATION.

BY MEMBERS OF THE ALPINE CLUB.

EDITED BY E. L. STRUTT.

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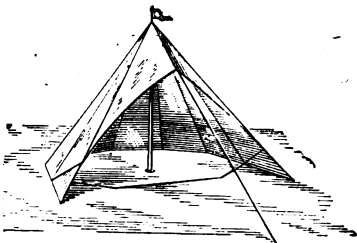


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THE ALPINE JOURNAL.

MAY 1928.

(No. 236.)

‘THE CLOSING OF THE ITALIAN ALPS.’

THE following is a translation of a note signed by the President of the Italian Alpine Club, printed in the *Rivista* of the Club (vol. xlvii, Nos. 1-2) in reply to our remonstrance in the last number of the Journal with regard to the annoyances to which English travellers and their guides were subjected in the Italian Alps during the past summer.

‘In the November number of the “Alpine Journal,” No. 235, there appeared an editorial article entitled “Closing the Italian Alps” and commenting unfavourably on the obstructions to free travel in the Alps and the demeanour of the National Volunteer Militia on the frontier towards foreign mountaineers. The article concludes with a warm appeal to the C.A.I. to interpret the wishes of British climbers to our Government. The matter in discussion is purely political and outside the field of mountaineering and our province. This much is quite clear, and we, as citizens and Fascisti, cannot take part in any discussion on the regulations of the State. We have, however, considered it our duty as good comrades to meet the wishes of our Alpine Club colleagues by sending to H.E. the Head of the Government a note in which, after referring to the importance of the Alpine Club, the oldest of all Alpine Clubs, and the universal consideration it enjoys, we draw his attention to the contents of the article and the wishes expressed therein.

‘This completes our actual task. But there is one thing of which we can assure our colleagues of the Alpine Club, and that is that General Bazan’s words on “the efficiency and

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perfect organization of the National Volunteer Militia and its enthusiasm and interest in the military exercises, which were such as to oblige their officers to issue orders enjoining moderation," cannot in any way have the slightest concern with the relations between the Militia and foreign mountaineers who come amongst us in good faith to visit our Alps.

'The whole text of General Bazan's statements (Milizia Fascista, 28 Agosto 1927) refers exclusively, without the shadow of a doubt, to the tactical exercises and manœuvres of the Militia, which were carried out in the Varesotto last summer by our Legioni della Lombardia; indeed, he speaks only of instruction for maniples (one-third of a cohort), centuries, cohorts, etc., of experiments in the liaison between units, the intervention of the aerial defence forces, of the spirit of self-sacrifice shown by the Militiamen, and of their warlike ardour. Therefore, everything stated to the contrary in the "A.J." article is due to erroneous information.

'Bound as we are by ancient and constant affection to the Alpine Club, we should have been happier if, before making a public appeal, it had applied privately and in friendship to the C.A.I., supposing that it had not, better still, seen fit to turn directly to H.E. the Head of the Government, who has always shown, and still shows, so much affection for our Great Friend, Britain.

'It only remains for us now to express the sincere hope that, all misapprehension and misunderstanding due to imperfect knowledge of our State regulations, which must necessarily be obeyed without discussion, being eliminated, our British colleagues will continue to visit our Alps, which they know so well, and in which their achievements and researches have left imperishable traces.

'The PRESIDENT of the Club Alpino Italiano.'

We desire, in printing the above communication, to put on record our sincere gratitude to the President of the Club Alpino Italiano for the readiness he has shown to comply with our request by bringing the matter of our remonstrance under the notice of H.E. the Head of the National Government. We feel assured that we may look forward to his H.E.'s known promptitude of action and expressed goodwill to ensure that any regulations which may have incidentally hampered the movements of foreign mountaineers in a region they have for the last fifty years found so much pleasure in frequenting will be

suitably modified. We would ask our Italian friends and colleagues to realize how fully we reciprocate their warm feelings and kindly expressions, and how eagerly we look forward to fresh opportunities of renewing old acquaintances with them among the mountains.

We will only add that in calling in the friendly aid of the C.A.I. in preference to applying formally through the ordinary diplomatic channels we were influenced by regard for a sentiment which is not confined to any single country. We refer to the dislike of the official intervention of foreigners in any matter that may possibly be considered from a national point of view as one of internal administration.

DAUPHINÉ AND THE AIGUILLE MÉRIDIONALE
D'ARVES IN 1899.

Unpublished Letters from the late Miss Gertrude Bell.

[These letters, and possibly one or two more to follow, were not included in 'Letters of Gertrude Bell,' because it was considered by Lady Bell that the Alpine portion of Miss Bell's life was sufficiently described therein. As the letters are of great interest to mountaineers, we express our gratitude for having been allowed to reproduce them in the JOURNAL.—*Editor.*]

LA GRAVE,
Friday, August 1899.

DEAREST Father, or rather dearest Family,—It was a great joy when I arrived here to find letters from you all. I got Mother's postcard also at the Lautaret. I *am* glad her tour was such a success. Tell her I long to talk to her about Bayreuth. Of course, it has a great deal changed. I must say I felt inclined more than once to regret its former simplicity. Still, we had a good time in a different way. Now I'll tell you my adventures.

I drove up to the Lautaret on Wednesday. Starting at 10 one doesn't get there till 6.30. There were two little old English men on the coach; one was a doctor and H-less, the other walked with me part of the way, till I left him and went on alone to the top of the pass. We had a perfect afternoon and the pass is very magnificent. You see the Aiguilles d'Arves at one point, and the Roche du Galibier stands up in front of

4 *Dauphiné and the Aiguille Méridionale d'Arves in 1899.*

you all the way. I got to the little hospice on the other side half an hour before the coach and had a cup of very nasty coffee. The man there comes from Le Monétier ; I told him of our relations with M. Izoard, and he promised to give him many messages from us. At Lautaret there was Mathon waiting for me with a son, Marius, who is to be my porter and who seems to be an efficient mountaineer and is a nice, civil boy. They have doubled the chalet at Lautaret and they are building another as large. I dined, arranged plans with Mathon and went to bed.

At 4 I was called—a glorious morning—so I bustled into my climbing clothes, had some chocolate, and at 5 we started for the Grand Galibier. It is quite a simple little climb. We took 3 hours to get to the top, stayed there an hour and came down in 2 hours by the *crête*. Mathon had allowed us 8 hours, so it was not bad for a first expedition. But . . . *pas sans peine* ! It was hard work ! I wished to die several times, and I cursed all idiots who climbed mountains. Mathon was very careful and nice. He's civil and pleasant to deal with. We had a gorgeous view from the top—the whole massif of the Pelvoux, the Aiguilles d'Arves and Mont Blanc. I took 3 photographs. Mathon asked a great deal after you all and especially after Hugo, about whom they were all very anxious to have news. Our old *Pic ne marche plus*, Léon is doing his service. I was dead beat when we came in, but a bath and lunch restored me, and at 2 we left by the coach for La Grave. It was most amusing arriving. The two good Juges were in a frantic state of excitement and sat with me on the terrace, while I had a cup of tea, talking as hard as they could. Madame Juge, directly we arrived, rushed at Mathon and asked after Hugo. Charles is still here, looking better than formerly, and Térésè came presently into my room and fell into my arms. 'Vous êtes chez vous, Mademoiselle,' said Madame Juge, and I really am. They killed the fatted calf for me, and as they have a new cook, he was better served up than before. They have made the kitchen behind, and the Salle des Guides in the *remise* and two sitting rooms on the ground floor, where the kitchen was. They are in great feather, because the Comtesse d'Eu is here with her two sons ! There is a rival hotel a little lower down, but they don't think it will do them any harm as there are lots of tourists.

The most interesting person here is a German woman,¹ who

¹ This lady, judging from the list of expeditions published in *R.A.D.*, appears to have been Fräulein Kuntze.—*Editor A.J.*

did the Meije two days ago. I talked to her after dinner and found her very nice. She spends four months of the year regularly climbing, and has her Oberland guide with her. She says there's a bad corner on the Meije! The snow and the rock are both in exceptionally good state. The mountain has been done three days running—and it's still wonderful weather.

I walked about the village, and saw all our friends; the shoemaker is very busy; Mathon's old aunt, who lives behind the inn, you remember, flourishing; the ironmonger has gone, that house having been bought by M. Juge. Harvey and Nichols were delighted to see me, the post office lady was also there. Directly she saw a postcard addressed to me (that was yours) she began to look out for us. They all asked after Hugo and Mother and the children. Aren't they dear people! I went to bed very early and slept nine hours, after which I felt better.

To-day is again glorious, a bright sun and not too hot. I'm only going up to a refuge this afternoon, but I've not yet seen Mathon. It lies between the Refuge de la République for the Aiguilles d'Arves, or the Refuge de l'Alpe for the Grande Ruine. I incline to the latter and should in that case go down to La Bérarde afterward. *Sur ce*, comes in Mathon. We go up to the Alpe to-day, pass over the Clot des Cavales to-morrow, sleep at the Châtelleret and then we shall see how we all feel. There's a big caravan going to the Refuge de la République to-day, which puts it out of the question. Mathon is frightfully keen to do the Meije,² of course, but I won't unless I feel up to it.

Ever your affectionate daughter,
GERTRUDE.

LA BÉRARDE,
Thursday, August 31, 1899.

DEAREST ELSA,³—This letter, I think, must be to you as I am going to tell you how I passed over your road of two years ago. We left La Grave on Tuesday at 3.45, I having undergone first a series of cross-questionings which would have done honour to Labori, from an American family, as to all my doings down to how many handkerchiefs I took with me on the mountains! We got up to the Refuge Chancel at 5.45, a most enjoyable two hours up that delicious hillside in a bright sunny evening. The Pics were overjoyed to see

² The traverse of La Meije is described in *Letters of Gertrude Bell*, I, pp. 51-4.

³ Miss Bell's sister, Lady Richmond.

me. I found the Refuge somewhat disorganised as they are building a new kitchen. Castillan from the Alpe was there helping. He also greeted me with enthusiasm. There was a wonderful red sunset which did not promise well for the morrow, and the Meije put on a nightcap of cloud. Mme. Pic gave me our room. About 7 appeared my two German friends, Paulcke and Lohmüller. They really are dears, so cheerful and polite and pleasant. We supped and talked till 9, when I went to bed. An agreeable evening.

We rose at 8. It was warm with a few clouds, and we thought we might have rain later, still we started at 4 and walked up to the Col⁴ in $2\frac{1}{4}$ hours, the snow very good. It was a very lovely dawn, the sun playing all kinds of games with tiny cloud wreaths and mists which came floating across the Pic de la Grave and the Râteau; the Meije looked splendid—but I was glad I was not making for that bare rock! On the Col we breakfasted and I parted from my two friends; they went up the Pic de la Grave⁵ and I all down the glacier for an hour to a beautiful plateau on which stands the Refuge du Lac Noir. We had a little light mist, but the day went on improving. Across the valley of the Romanche hung quite a thick band of fleecy cloud with Mont Blanc and the Aiguilles d'Arves putting their heads out through it.

From the Lac Noir we had a long and very steep descent, first over rocks, then down very steep grass full of flowers, to the Vallée de la Selle. By taking this road we avoided all that endless *éboulis* in the Selle Valley, up which you must have come. We got into Saint Christophe a little before 11, very charming it is. I was touched to find there the grave of my friend Zsigmondy, remembering how difficult I had found it to get off his Brèche on the Meije. He died on the Meije, you remember. I was rather footsore and felt a bruise which I contracted on the Meije, so I bathed my feet in salt and water and descended shoeless to lunch. There was a horrid old couple to whom I apologised very politely for my stockinged state, explaining how it was. The man looked at me coldly. . . . I was furiously raging, but I said nothing and contented myself with completely spoiling their lunch, for they were so afraid of being let into addressing me that they did not dare to speak to one another even! When the dishes were served, they first helped themselves and then the man pushed them rudely

⁴ Col de la Lauze, 3543 m.

⁵ According to S. T. D., this ascent was on August 30, 1899.



Phot. V. Sella.

LES ÉCRINS, GRANDE RUINE AND PIC BOURCET, ETC.,
from Pyramide Duhamel.

across to me without a word. Wasn't it intolerable? They were toddlekins!

After lunch I slept soundly for an hour and started off at 2.30. I must tell you I had most neatly *croqueted* my luggage, which I had sent round from La Grave and despatched it on its way by a mule, together with all that my guides were carrying. We got here at 4.45—a most delicious walk. There was a little cloud, so that it was not too hot, and the valley of the Vénéon is certainly one of the loveliest that I have seen in Dauphiné. I remember you were very enthusiastic about it. The combination of bare peaks and narrow green meadow set with birch trees beneath is quite perfect. I felt extremely brisk and enjoyed myself madly. Altogether this tour is being wonderfully amusing, far more so than I expected. I have so very little spare time that I scarcely even feel lonely, but the time when I miss my family most is when we are going up some deadly slope of snow or stone, and then I long to have someone to whom I can say 'Isn't it beastly?' (Not Mother! She would be shocked!) There was only one other person in the hotel here, a charming old Frenchman. We dined together (and well!) and had an amusing talk. In the end I found that he had been to China and Japan and knew M. Dubail, tell Maurice, so we compared reminiscences at great length and were thoroughly happy. He was the greatest old dear. He left this morning before I was up. Towards the end of dinner came in my two Germans, having had a long but apparently a very pleasant day. We all sat talking while they dined, and then I went to bed and slept the clock round.

This morning the weather has improved wonderfully; it looks quite settled, and we go up this evening to the Refuge du Carrelet. My plan is to do the Barre des Écrins,⁶ from thence *en col*, descending on to Ailefroide. The next day to go up to the Refuge de Provence (4 hours), and from thence to do the Pelvoux, returning again to Ailefroide. That is not a hard day as the Refuge is only 4 hours from the summit, but it is said to be a very beautiful mountain. Finally, I shall cross the Col de la Temple back here, and the day after, if possible, return to La Grave, taking the Grande Ruine *en col* on my way. The long day is to-morrow—13 hours at least for the Écrins, and it's all snow, so that if the snow is bad, Heaven knows how many hours we may not spend step-cutting. I am sending

⁶ These expeditions, except, apparently, the traverse of the Grande Ruine, were carried out duly. See *A.J.* 39, 242–8.

8 *Dauphiné and the Aiguille Méridionale d'Arves in 1899.*

Hippolyte Rodier, the brother of the other, over the Col de la Temple to-morrow with a change of clothes, which I shall thus find at Ailefroide when I arrive. I might possibly be kept there an extra day if I am tired after the Écrins, and I don't think I can leave myself absolutely clotheless. I'm not going to send a gown, however. My Germans do the Écrins to-morrow also. I'm quite glad ; they are very cheerful companions, and it's more amusing to have someone to talk to. We don't climb much together as Mathon knows the way better and generally leaves them behind, but we meet at the halting places. There is said to be one difficult place on the Écrins, a snow couloir, but it's all nothing to the Meije. I've just been looking at its spiteful old head appearing at the end of the valley. Isn't this a charming place ! I am spending a most peaceful and pleasant morning. Dr. Paulcké has been sitting by at his needle till just now ; he has gone off to draw, I think. They are both twenty-six they have confided to me. Paulcke is on the whole the nicest ; he is going next week to join . . . but this is a dead secret, so don't mention it ! Another dead secret is that Lohmüller is here without leave ! He is by way of being in Germany at this moment, so he preserves a strict *incognito* lest the Emperor should hear of it !

I like the people here. M. Tairraz has been taking down notes of our doings that he may mention ⁷ them in the *Revue des Alpes Dauphinoises* to which I have *abonnéé* myself for a year. It's 6 francs *pour l'étranger*. Goodbye ; I wish you were here, don't you ? Mathon and Marius continue to be most satisfactory. Oh, I want Papa to advise me—when I pay them what sort of present ought I to make them ? I told you Mathon lost his ice-axe on the Meije—would it be suitable if I were to present him with a new one or not ? Don't forget to tell me this. I expect Rodier will bring me letters to Ailefroide to-morrow. They are being forwarded from La Grave. I expect to be back there, with luck and good weather, on Tuesday night.

Ever your very affectionate sister,
GERTRUDE.

I'm awfully well, but very thin and very burnt ! You must expect to see a dark red stick alighting on Redcar platform.

⁷ M. Auguste Tairraz appears to have forgotten to mention them !



Phot. Alfred Holmes.

S.W. FACE OF SOUTHERN AIGUILLE D'ARVES.

LA GRAVE,
September 7, 1899.

DEAREST MOTHER,—To you this time. I'm sure you must be longing to hear more of *crêtes* and *couloirs* and *pentes de neige* ! Well, on Tuesday it was very fine, so I thought it would be well to catch the Aiguilles d'Arves which had been looking at me from afar for so long. I accordingly arranged with Mathon to go up to the Refuge Républicain that afternoon. I spent the morning reading papers and talking to my nice old French couple. At 11 my two dear Germans arrived from Le Monétier and announced that they also were going up to the Refuge that afternoon. So we agreed to go together. It was very hot and we had a short thunderstorm after lunch, but at 3.30 we started, Marius having already gone on with my things and a donkey carrying wood for our fire.

Our road lay up the desolate and frankly hideous valley behind Les Hières. Moll, Hugo and I drove a little way up it on one memorable occasion !. Two very hot hours brought us to the Col, and in a few minutes more we turned a corner (I had begun to think that the Aiguilles d'Arves didn't really exist) and came upon one of the most singular views I have ever seen. We found ourselves in a great basin which must have once been a lake. The mountains rose so steeply from it that scarcely any grass could grow on them, bare rocks lying in twisted layers. A glacier stream ran through the basin over a very wide stony bed, the end was closed by heaps of stones and the tail of a glacier, and over all towered the two rocky peaks of the Aiguilles d'Arves. In the growing dusk it would be impossible to imagine anything more inhuman or forbidding. I felt inclined to turn tail and run back, till I was encouraged by seeing the dear donkey returning with his man from the Refuge. It was so comforting to see some sign of human life. He came in very handy, the dear donkey, for we met just as I reached the stream, which was wide and deep, so I mounted him and made him carry me over it, arriving at the Refuge dry-footed at a little before 6.30. Marius was already busy cooking the soup outside.⁸

The Refuge was tiny, we had all to get up from our bench before the door could be opened, but we supped cheerfully and had a good night till 3 A.M. But the nights are cold ; I was

⁸ This hut, *Refuge Lyon-Républicain*, after many vicissitudes was destroyed by an avalanche in 1904. *La Montagne*, 1928, pp. 89-90.

distinctly conscious of the fact even though I slept. We were ready to be off by 4, but we waited half an hour longer for the light and left as soon as we could just see our way.

It was a perfectly clear, starry morning, fresh and delicious. We went up over stones and névés till we reached the Col Lombard right at the foot of the Aiguille Méridionale (which is the difficult one) at 6. Another half hour over easy rocks and we stopped to rope and eat a little. We were off again at 7, leaving all our baggage and our ice axes on the rocks. Then began a most charming climb up a couloir with a little ice at the bottom of it, but so narrow that we kept to the rocks with a foot on either side. The Germans went first; they had put on lovely climbing boots with soles made of string. At the top of the couloir we turned a corner and came out face to face with the Aiguille Centrale which has a most impossible aspect, but is quite easily ascended from the other side. We now found ourselves upon some *dalles* of rock, like the tiles of a roof, lying at a very steep angle, the edge of them disappeared into space. All this rock was delightful to walk on, for the whole Aiguille is made of a sort of conglomerate out of which little stones have been washed away leaving a rough surface with natural holes for one's hands and feet.

We were at the foot of the famous *mauvais pas*, which consists of an overhanging rock just too high to get up, so that the first man has to mount on the shoulders of the second and help him up subsequently with the rope. I crept along a ledge and photographed the two Germans while they did this—I do hope my two photographs will come out, they will be most interesting. Then it was our turn. I planted myself firmly on a ledge and was unroped; Mathon mounted on the shoulders of Marius and went up with all the rope, 30 ft. or so. When he was well placed he called out to me, I was tied on to the rope, got on to Marius's shoulders in my turn and climbed up to Mathon. It was most enjoyable. When I got up, I was again unroped, and the end of the rope was let down to Marius. This place is said to be more difficult than anything on the Meije, but for my part I found the Brèche Zsigmondy far harder. Probably, as I have learnt a good deal since then, I should now think it easier than I did ten days ago, but still, on the Aiguille your guide is straight overhead and the rope taut between you and him, while on the Brèche he is round a corner and can't help you much, though I suppose he could catch you if you fell, if the rope held.

Another ten minutes of *dalles* led us on to the 'church roof'

when we were only a few minutes from the summit. One has the best view of the Meije and the Écrins I have yet seen. We got there ⁹ at 8.15 and left at 8.45. The descent was easier and pleasanter than the ascent. Mathon began by holding the rope so tight that it cut me, but I succeeded in persuading him that I intended to go down by the usual path and he presently left me alone. We got down to the Col at 9.15, and there my dear Germans and I parted. I going down to the Refuge, which I reached at 11.30, and they over another Col and so away to St. Michel. They have been angels, I must say! Paulcke gave me a large pair of woollen gloves, without fingers, as a parting gift, so that I shall not be frost-bitten again.¹⁰

On the whole I liked the Aiguille better than anything I have done. It was agreeably short and most amusing climbing—all rock which is just what I like, for I'm getting quite good at it. Whereas if you put me on a piece of ice, I take the very first opportunity of falling flat! I lunched at the Refuge and slept most peacefully for an hour. We left at 2 and were back here before 3, the walk down being most pleasant, for one had the great Meije with all its snows to look at all the time. There's not a white man in the hotel (my French couple had left; I found a most charming message from them on a card saying how they had enjoyed making my acquaintance!), but one Alpinist from Lyons, who knows the country very well and has promised to send me a lot of his photographs. I have been having a long talk with him, the outcome of which is that I have decided on a most promising final expedition. I shall go up to the Refuge de l'Alpe to sleep, cross the Col de la Pyramide behind it (this Col leads on to the Glacier Blanc and is, it seems, most beautiful), make a flank march to the left above the Glacier Blanc and so by the Col Tuckett to the Montagne des Agneaux, which is the most eastern of the Pelvoux group. I shall descend by a good glacier to le Monétier and sleep there. I expect it will be a long day, 14 or 15 hours, but I shall take a day or two's rest first, and my Lyons friend says that the views from the Col de la Pyramide and the Montagne des Agneaux are quite unsurpassed in all Oisans.¹¹

Meantime, alas! my films haven't come and I used my last yesterday, and the Col has never been photographed, so that it

⁹ The expedition is duly recorded in S. T. D., without the mention of the day or month.

¹⁰ Cf. *A.J.* 39, 245.

¹¹ It is uncertain whether this expedition was carried out or not.

would have been real fun to have had them. Isn't it a pity ! I mean to leave here on Tuesday or Wednesday, depending on when I get this last expedition through. I'm rather keen about it. Oh, dear ! this has been fun !

GERTRUDE.

(*To be continued.*)

THE AIGUILLES D'ARVES.

Some Notes and Memories.

By CLAUDE WILSON.

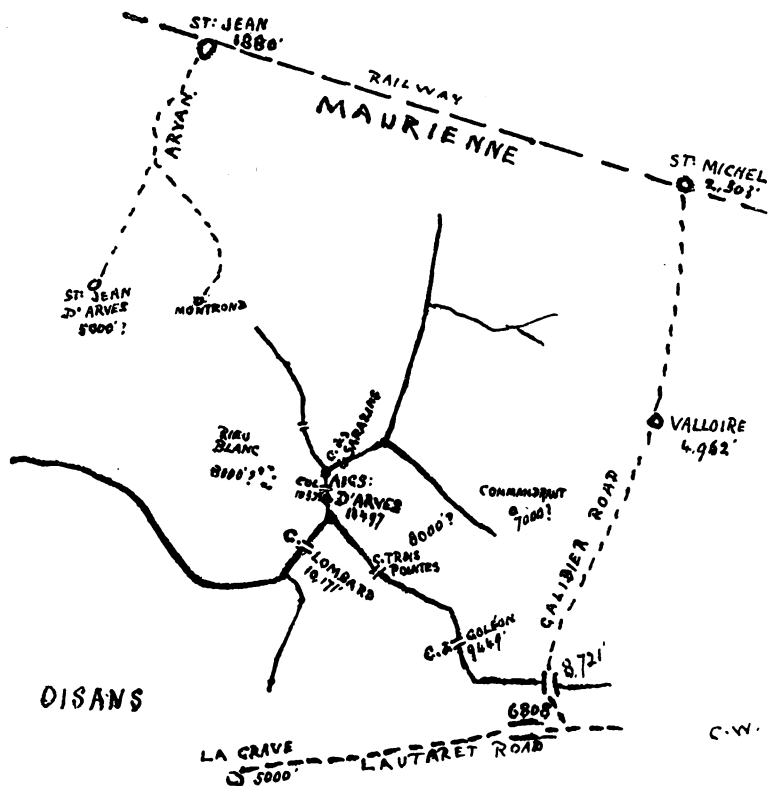
THE lamentable accident which, on July 31, 1927, deprived many of us of an irreplaceable friendship, and lost to the Club one of its most valued and distinguished members, has been followed, as was inevitable, by many consequences. Probably the least expected among these was the singular discovery that no Englishman now living had any knowledge worth having of the topography of the district, or more than the scantiest acquaintance with the various routes by which these summits have been reached.

I had been twice up the S. Aiguille, and had descended once by the E. face, up which Mr. Bicknell's party were forcing their way when the accident happened. My climbs were made more than thirty years ago, and we had good reason for hurrying down to Valloire without much pause for looking back. My memory of the E. face, apart from certain vivid incidents, was hazy. Consequently, I wrote to those who I thought might know more, with the strange result that there appeared to be no one who knew even as much. The Editor, who was one of my correspondents, pointed out that, though there were numerous allusions, no 'paper' upon the Aiguilles d'Arves had ever appeared in the pages of the ALPINE JOURNAL. This was clearly a case which called for remedy, and the onus was placed upon my shoulders.

I have found the investigation full of interest, though fraught with unexpected difficulties. I asked for a map, but it appeared that neither the Alpine Club nor the map-shops of London could help me, and I was eventually supplied with an enormous and much dilapidated ¹ sheet kindly lent by the

¹ The French 1:80,000 map, uncoloured—a lugubrious production.—*Editor.*

Royal Geographical Society. Unrolled and held down by weights upon a billiard table, there was no difficulty in discovering the Mont Cenis railway and the principal roads; but no light whatever was shed on any of the details I was seeking. A search in my own library discovered some interesting and helpful historical material, and I was directed



by the Editor to vol. vi (1910) of *La Montagne*, which contains some eighty closely printed pages by M. Jean Capdepon, in which the geology, topography, history and bibliography of these peaks are very fully discussed. From this and other sources I have evolved the scheme map and topographical sketches reproduced in this paper. The sketches, though based on various photographs, must be regarded as diagrammatic. The scale is not quite uniform, and faults of detail are numerous.

Had I not been so fortunate as to secure the co-operation of Mr. Willink, I should hardly have had the temerity to undertake a task for which I was so ill-prepared ; but I am sure that my own shortcomings will be forgiven and that I shall earn the thanks of my fellow members in having secured these unique illustrations.

As has been noticed by all observers, Mr. Willink's activities bear a striking resemblance to those of Washington Irving's legendary hero. 'Winkle' is, of course, merely the Dutch equivalent of 'Willink' ; and philologists are agreed that the initials H. G. and R. V. are interchangeable. With all such immortals 'Time' is a vague affair. Their periods of sleeping and waking are not divided by days and nights, but rather by decades, or even centuries ; and the working of such minds is not to be measured by ordinary standards. My letter found Mr. Willink on the point of wakening from a sleep of several years' duration. But he was sufficiently awake to reply, and asked what sort of clothes we wore in those days —because he 'didn't care to invent clothes.' He appeared to be greatly surprised and somewhat confused by sketches of the ready-made-tailor-catalogue-type which I sent ; and in a state which suggested semi-consciousness 'Oh,' he replied 'I thought you would be thushow,' and I received the sketch which is reproduced (without his permission) at the end of this paper. This lack of permission also applies to the thumb-nail sketch, received later and incorporated into the text at the psychological spot.

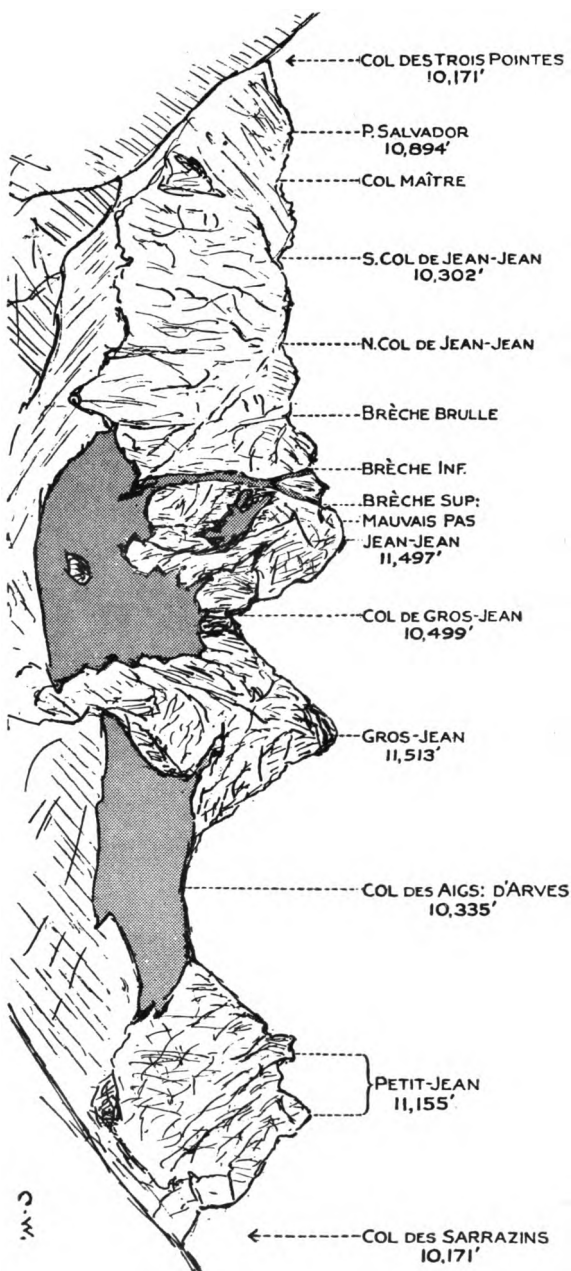
Supplied with further material, Mr. Willink became more and more awake and more alive, and, after having dined at the annual dinner in December, produced the terrifying drawings which will confer immortality upon this number of the *ALPINE JOURNAL*.

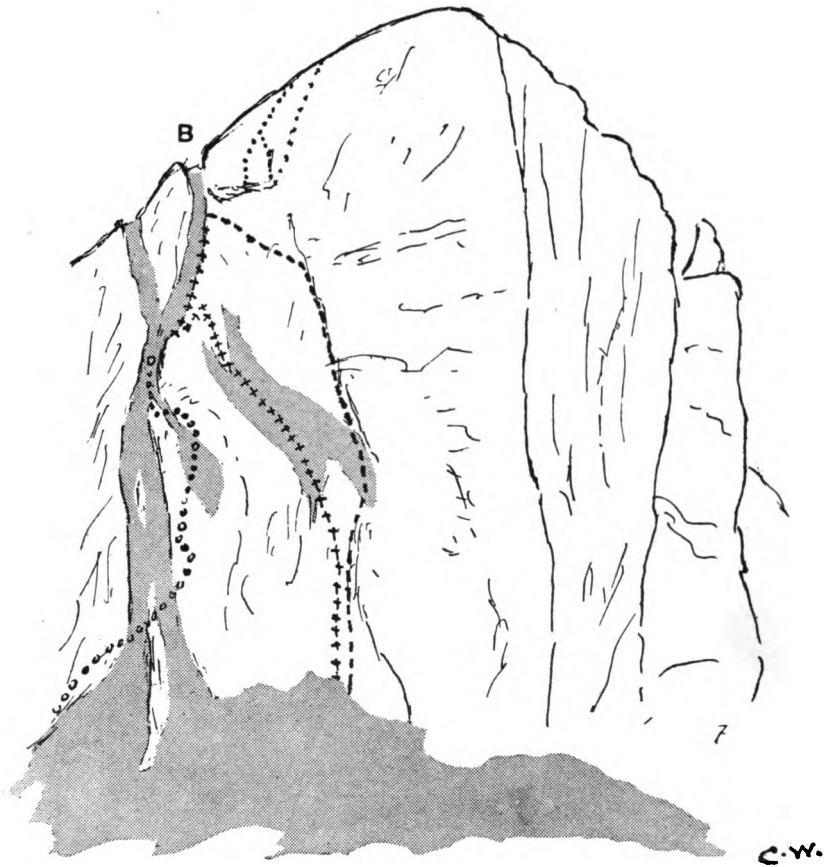
The three peaks which form the group known as the Aiguilles d'Arves are the culminating points of the ridge which separates the Valloire valley from the Val d'Arvan. They run almost due N. and S., and, with the exception of the Aiguille Méridionale, lie entirely in the Maurienne area and drain northwards into the Arc. But the S. peak (Aiguille Méridionale) also reaches the watershed which divides the districts of Maurienne and Oisans, and, while the streams from its Eastern and Western slopes run into the Arc, its S. face drains into the Romanche, a little above La Grave.

THE AIGUILLES D'ARVES FROM THE EAST

GL: GROS JEAN

GL: DES AIGS D'ARVES





EAST FACE OF AIG. MÉRIDIONALE D'ARVES

B: BRÈCHE SUPÉRIEURE

..... MAUVAIS PAS AND VARIATIONS

----- CORRA ROUTE UP (1891)

++++ WILSON-PASTEUR-ALMER ROUTE DOWN (1892)

oooo BICKNELL ROUTE (1927)

The three peaks are known respectively as :—

Aiguille Septentrionale (Petit Jean or *le Fourchu*) (11,155 ft.).

Aiguille Centrale (Gros Jean or *le Pointu*) (11,513 ft.).

Aiguille Méridionale (Jean Jean or *le Gros Rond*) (11,499 ft.).

These heights, as elsewhere in this paper, are taken from Coolidge's 'Climber's Guide,' but there has been much discussion as to which of the two latter is the higher. They are approximately of the same height.²

The district was explored in the early 'sixties by many English climbers, and Whymper's beautiful woodcut of the Western side of the group is known to all. The Central peak was first climbed by local hunters in 1839, the twin summits of the N. Aiguille by Mr. Coolidge in 1873 and 1878, and the S. Aiguille by Mr. Coolidge with the guides Christian Almer, père et fils, in 1878.

It is doubtful if more than two or three living Englishmen have ascended either the Northern or the Central peak. The Septentrionale has been ascended only from the S. (Col des Aiguilles d'Arves), and while its first summit is easily reached, the traverse thence to the Northern point is not easy. Few, if any, variations have been made, while a solitary descent towards the Col des Sarassins has probably never been repeated.

The Aiguille Centrale can be climbed easily enough from the N., while two or three routes (far from easy) have been made up or down the S.E. face.

The Col des Aiguilles d'Arves between the Northern and Central peaks presents no difficulties, but the short cliff which, on the E. side, separates the Col de Gros Jean from the glacier is very difficult, and the pass appears to have been made only once or twice.

The interest in the two Northern peaks has been completely overshadowed by the celebrity accorded to the Aiguille Méridionale, on account of the difficult step of about 50 ft., situated on the N.E. face quite near the top, and known since the 'eighties as the 'Mauvais Pas.' The S. Aiguille is, moreover,

² Vol. III of M. Emile Gaillard's *Alpes de Savoie* (Chambéry—n.d.), which I only discovered after this paper was completed, and which contains sketch maps and routes, gives the honour to the Méridionale (3510 m.) as against the Centrale (3509 m.), while the Septentrionale is put at 3350 m.—i.e. 528 ft. lower than the highest.

the only one of the three which can be comfortably climbed up and down in a day from La Grave.

THE AIGUILLE MÉRIDIONALE.

In 1889 Mr. Coolidge, writing in 'Sleigh-Bells' (The Xmas No. of the *St. Moritz Post*), made the statement that, up to that date, almost every ascent had been celebrated by a special monograph, and since then there have been many special articles and very numerous notes chiefly in the publications of the French, German, Italian, and Swiss Alpine Clubs, though there are well over a dozen references in our own JOURNAL. It was in 1910 that M. Jean Capdepon collected the information then available and wrote the two exhaustive papers which form the 'classic' of the mountain and give full references to all other sources of information up to that date.³

About a score—possibly more—of English climbers appear to have made the ascent of the Aiguille, and nine out of ten have gone up and down direct from La Grave *via* the Col Lombard, whence the *Mauvais Pas* is reached by one of the two 'brèches' on the S.E. arête.⁴

In the 'Climbers Guide to the Central Alps of the Dauphiny' (1892), Mr. Coolidge stated that the foot of the *Mauvais Pas* 'has been reached direct from the head of the Aiguilles d'Arves glen' (*i.e.* from the E. side), apparently by a very direct route up or close to a couloir, landing near the Brèche Supérieure. He did not state that this route had then been made only once and was considered a somewhat remarkable *tour de force*. He could not know that M. Jean Capdepon would write in *La Montagne*, 1910 (p. 336), that the ascent of this face had been repeated only four times and the descent made but twice; though a descent further S. (*Brèche Brulle*) by Messrs. Bartleet and Mothersill and a 'course problématique' by 'une caravane Anglaise,' are mentioned in a footnote as possible additions to the list.

It was doubtless in ignorance of the very formidable nature of the N.E. face that Mr. Bicknell's party started on what they probably imagined would prove a fairly simple climb up to the *Mauvais Pas*. It was certainly in ignorance of what lay

³ *La Montagne*, Vol. VI, 1910, pp. 321–359, 397–440.

⁴ A C.A.F. Club hut, Refuge Lombard, has been built, some 5½ hours above La Grave (opened in 1927).

between the *Mauvais Pas* and the Glacier de Gros Jean that C. H. Pasteur and I, with Ulrich Almer, made what appears to have been the first descent of (and the second expedition on) this great precipice (July 30, 1892). All we knew was what the guide-book said. We imagined it to be a well-known, if perhaps a somewhat unfrequented route; and, not knowing that we had done anything out of the common, we did not record it. But this was doubtless the 'course problématique' referred to in M. Capdepon's footnote. Stated shortly, the story of our expedition was this: We were a party of six—including three ladies and a guide. We had spent a fortnight at La Bérarde and were on our way to Chamonix. On July 29 the whole party crossed the Brèche de la Meije, arriving at La Grave in the early afternoon; and, while our programme for the 30th proved to be more formidable than had been anticipated, it was carried out without a hitch. The ladies, with the luggage, were to start after breakfast, and drive over the Col du Galibier, while C. H. Pasteur, Ulrich Almer and I, starting early, were to climb the S. Aiguille d'Arves (*Jean Jean*) via the Col Lombard, to descend by the N.E. face and the Aiguilles d'Arves glen, and meet the ladies at Valloire, whence we were all to drive down to St. Michel de Maurienne and proceed by train to Aix. The weather was good and the rocks dry, but there was a good deal of snow and ice on the mountain, which, later in the year—according to many photos—consists entirely of bare rock. Our times were:—

La Grave	02.00
Col Lombard	07.00—07.30
Brèche Supérieure	08.30—09.00
Top of S. Aiguille	10.00—10.10
Brèche Supérieure	11.00
Glacier de Gros Jean	12.30
Valloire	15.00—15.45
St. Michel de Maurienne	17.45—18.10
Aix-les-Bains	21.00

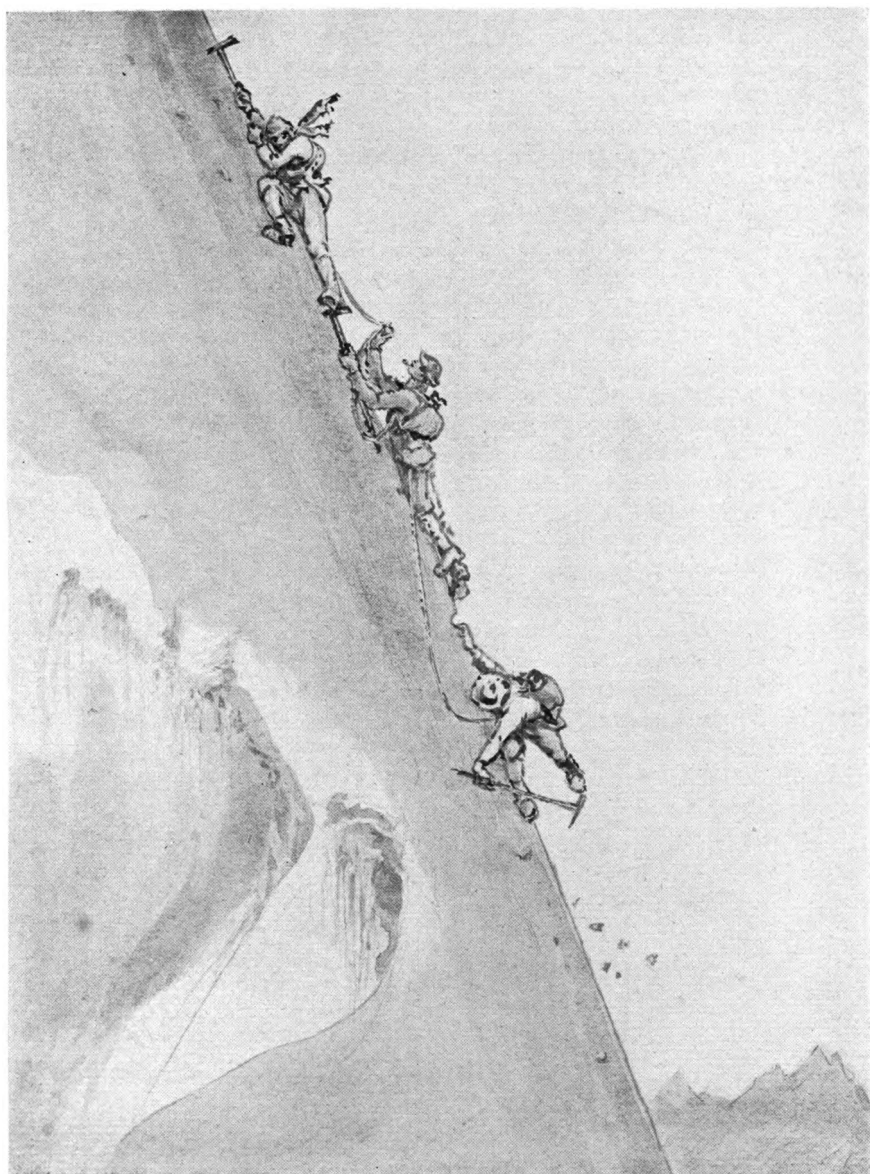
With regard to our expedition, the only difficulty in the ascent was at the *Mauvais Pas*. Ulrich got up the initial overhang by standing on my shoulders and my head. He then went out to the left and reached the 'nasty place' on the smooth bulge, where foothold is bad and handhold negligible, where one cannot see beyond the 6 ft. stretch of steep rock that lies above one's hands, nor anything whatever but the sky and the birds below and between one's feet.

Of those who have reached this place before the cable was fixed, probably not one has felt very happy; some have retreated not without difficulty and danger; two at least have fallen and been killed: most have felt that it was easier to go on than to turn back. If there is decent handhold just above the visible 6 ft., all will be well; if not, retreat will be doubtfully possible. Fortunately there is good handhold at this critical spot and the rest of the scramble, to the piton at the top of the *Mauvais Pas*, is quite simple. Ulrich, arriving at this 'nasty place,' out of my view but partly in sight from Pasteur's stance, whence he looked much more happily placed than was actually the case, called out 'Can you hold me if I slip?' and Pasteur shouted 'Yes, of course we can.' Of course we knew he couldn't, and also that, on a rock in good condition that had been climbed before, Ulrich would not slip. But though the sloping ledge at the foot of the *Mauvais Pas* has two or three good cracks, in each of which one 'camarade' can feel quite comfortable, there is nothing whatever in the way of a belay, and the ledge ends a few feet below in a straight drop of some 1500 ft.⁵ We were soon on the comfortable summit and descending the *Mauvais Pas* on a doubled rope, were soon back at our sacks on the Brèche Supérieure. Ulrich had led up, and I, at the other end of the rope, started down the E. face, keeping near the couloir leading down from the Brèche. But we shortly came to a place where the couloir and the rocks on either side of it take a sudden plunge—the couloir being like a waterfall between nearly vertical cliffs.⁶

We retraced our steps for perhaps 100 ft., and then turned diagonally downwards towards the N., shortly coming to a steep slope of ice, below which, at its Northern end, the rocks looked possible; although the ice-slope itself, like all other ledges on this face, ended below in a direct drop. The ice

⁵ Looking at the profile of the S. Aiguille from the Aiguille Centrale, Signor Canzio says (1901): 'Contempler cette terrible muraille, cette formidable face, et songer que bientôt il vous faudrait aller cheminer au-dessus de ce vide, suffisait à vous couper l'haleine. Heureusement, lorsqu'on est là-haut on ne voit ni par les yeux ni par la mémoire ce que l'on a, ou plutôt ce que l'on n'a pas, au-dessous de soi. S'il n'en était ainsi, je pense que personne n'aurait jamais hasardé cette escalade.'

⁶ It was up this couloir and by its N. bank, a route that no one had previously attempted, that Mr. Bicknell's party tried to force their way.



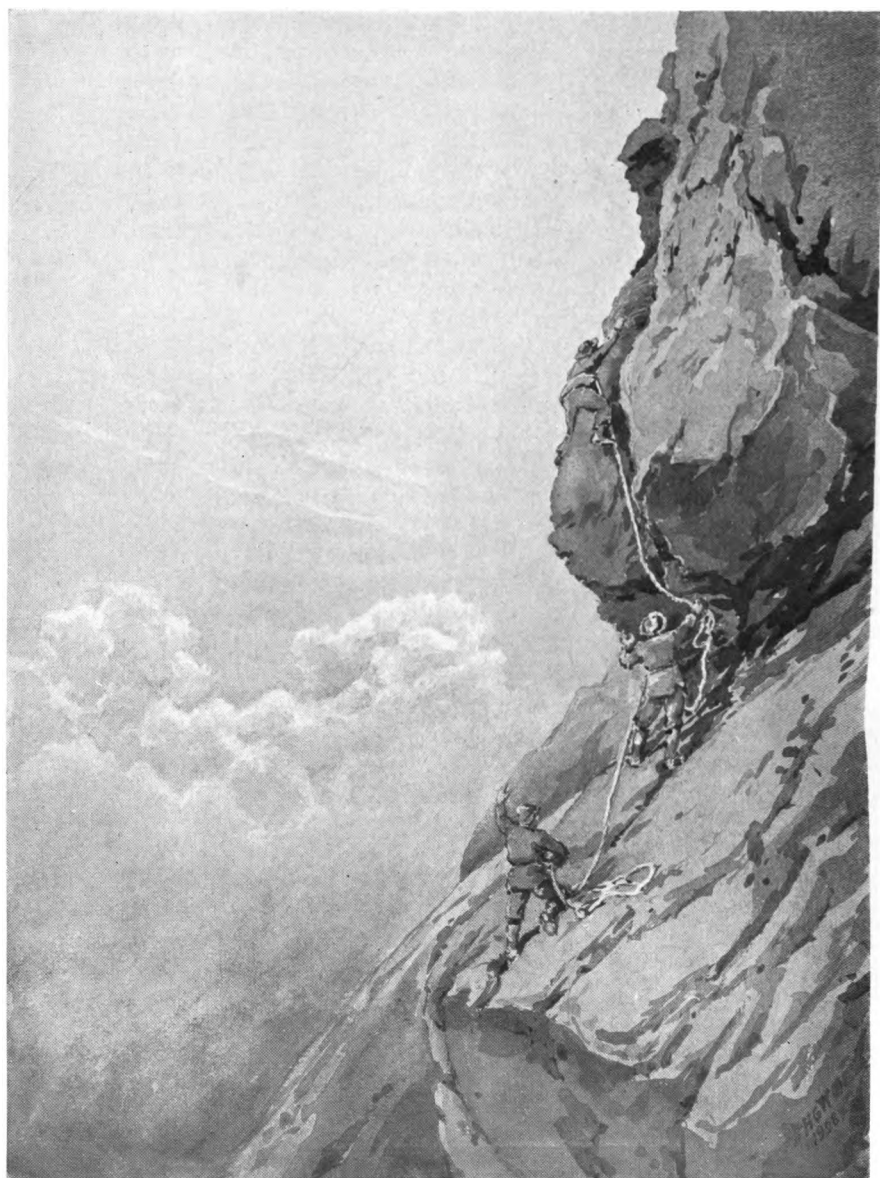
H. G. Willink.

U.A.

C.P.

C.W.

SAFETY LAST!



H. G. Willink.

C.W.

J.H.W.

T.L.K.

Climbing the "MAUVAIS PAS."

was pretty hard, and I have a dim recollection that Pasteur found fault with my steps. However, Ulrich backed the smaller steps as preferable to spending longer than was necessary on the steep ice, and proclaimed cheerily that he could hold the lot if we slipped. But of course he knew he couldn't; and perhaps he trusted us as we, on better grounds, had trusted him. Once beyond this patch of ice we found no real difficulty, and, as with about twenty minutes lost on a false scent and half-an-hour of step cutting, we only took $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours from the Brèche to the glacier, we did not doubt but that we had struck the 'ordinary route.'

From a study of M. Capdepon's papers, I gather (p. 338) that Signor G. Corra's ascent (Sept. 13, 1891) corresponded in its lower half with the lower half of our descent. Higher up he kept to the rocks above and to the N. of the ice-slope which is well seen in the illustration facing p. 344. Signor Corra took $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours from the moraine to the *Mauvais Pas* (p. 423) including halts, and M. Capdepon estimates (p. 338) about $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours for the actual rock climb up or down from the glacier to the Brèche Supérieure. It is possible that we saved time by cutting down the ice, but we would not have chosen it had we known that there was a possible route down the rocks, the key to which lies in turning to the N. almost immediately after leaving the Brèche Supérieure, the general trend of the route being almost vertically below the *Mauvais Pas* and altogether to the N. of a vertical line descending from the Brèche. The face is steep enough but not so steep as Signor Canzio had envisaged it. Our descent struck us all as rather dangerous and very unpleasant; we would not have repeated it willingly, but it served our purpose excellently.⁷

Four years later—June 19, 1896—found me again on the same mountain, this time in company with J. H. Wicks and T. L. Kesteven, going up and down, as most people do, from La Grave. We started at midnight and got back at 4 P.M. It was early in the year, and the N.E. face may have been plastered with snow, as it appears in some photographs. But as already stated, when 'au-dessus on ne voit pas ce que l'on a, ou plutôt ce que l'on n'a pas, au-dessous de soi,' and

⁷ There are two easier routes leading from the Glacier de Gros Jean to points further E. on the arête and a other from a point considerably lower down in the Aiguilles d'Arves glen (Capdepon, photo, p. 338), leading to the Col d' Trois Pointes, this last more of a rough walk than a rock climb.

whether the conditions of descent would have been better or worse than on bare rock or than on a mixture of bare rock and bare ice is doubtful. One can imagine that good hard snow, well and firmly plastered on to the rocks and into the cracks and couloirs might make things easier, although *not* after the sun had reached it. But the snow on the slopes and in the couloirs running up from the Col Lombard to the ridge was hard while the rocks which generally offer easier going were covered with *verglas*, so that this part of the climb took nearly twice as long as in my previous visit. The top rocks on the E. face were in excellent condition and we spent an hour below the *Mauvais Pas*, partly waiting for the sun to warm the rocks (8 to 9 A.M.), and partly examining the slabs to the N. where, as we knew from Coolidge's guide, Emil Pic (with M. Prosper Roget) had made a route in 1884, joining up with the ordinary way at the top of the *Mauvais Pas*, and where, as we learned subsequently, Signori Corra and Vaccarone in 1890 made, with two Italian guides, a variation going still further up the face before joining the S.E. arête above the top of the *Mauvais Pas*. On my previous visit we had taken a look at these repulsive slabs, but were astonished now to notice a route up them marked with splashes of red paint. These, says M. Capdepon (p. 346), were made in July 1894 by M. Ernest Thorant⁸ climbing 'solitaire.'

In 1896 none of us had made the acquaintance of either *kletterschuhen* or rubbers, and, as my small experience of climbing in my socks had left painful memories, we did not try the 'dalles.' Having thus spent or wasted an hour, we returned to the foot of the *Mauvais Pas*, and I, the leader for the day (we took the lead in turns), mounted on Wicks' shoulders and head and got well placed above the short overhang. Thence I went up and out to the left and arrived at the 'nasty place.' Here I hesitated; but the return was awkward, and Kesteven placed where Pasteur had been when Ulrich had asked if we could hold him, and who, by the way, is a much better rock climber than ever I was, shouted 'Go on—it's quite easy, or come down and let me do it,' and so goaded or encouraged, up I went, and in less than a minute had my hands gripping the good hold at the top of the 'nasty bit.'

⁸ M. Thorant was killed, together with his companion, on the Meije, August 20, 1896. *A.J.* 18, 263-5. Signor G. Corra perished on the Petite Sassièrè on August 26 of the same year. *Ibid.*, 265-6.

M. Capdepon—climbing with his friend M. Piaget—had three shots at the *Mauvais Pas* before he got up (1) 1907 (p. 399), (' Il n'y a pas de corde fixe '). Reaching the stance at the top of the overhang, by help of his friend's shoulders, he tried two or three times to get up. His hands and feet 'se crispèrent au rocher' and he descended discouraged. (2) 1908 ? (p. 409) : they found the rocks all *verglas*, but, in the interval, the fixed cord had been placed. It was too tempting. The cord was caught in the ice above, but they shook it free and M. Capdepon pulled himself up by 'le solide câble' though his feet got no hold on the ice-glazed rock. Near the top he came across a length of rope completely embedded in 'une plaque de glace,' and he was unable to reach beyond it. 'Piaget, qui attendait à tout moment mon hurrah de victoire, me retrouva soudain à cheval sur ses épaules.' (3) 1909 (p. 417) : the rocks in good condition and the cord dry ; no difficulty was encountered.



It will be recollected that in 1885 the renowned party of Austrian guideless climbers, Herren Kellerbauer, Purtscheller and Schulz (Capdepon, p. 353), declined to try the *Mauvais Pas*, not because they thought it impossible, but because they thought it imprudent. I have always admired and commended their courage.

Doubtless a fixed cord deprives the ascent of all danger, and renders it of but small interest. Yet if a fixed cord is allowable anywhere, I know of no 'step' in the Alps where its existence can be more fully justified.⁹

⁹ The history of the fixed rope is not easy to unravel. Mr. Coolidge's party, on the first ascent (1878), left a rope-loop hitched round 'a knob of rock,' quite at the top of the step, through which their spare rope was threaded for the descent, and this loop was known to be still there in 1885. (*A.J.* 13, 192.)

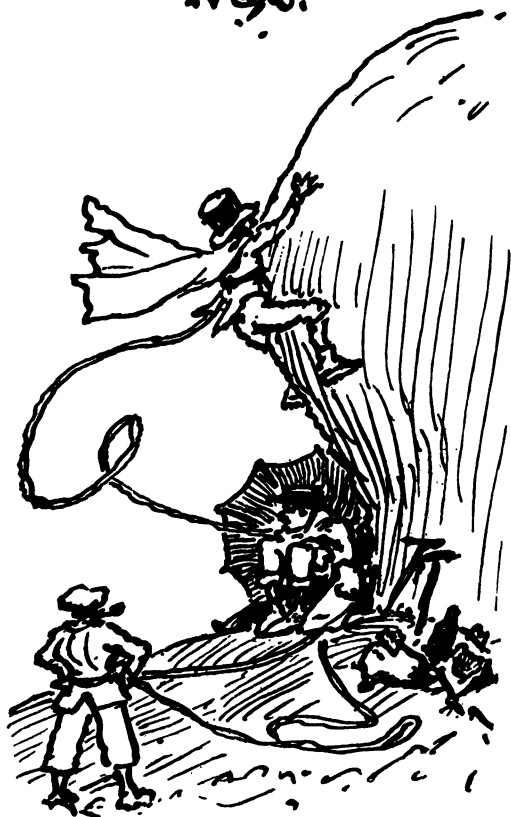
When I was there in 1892 and again in 1896, there was, if I recollect aright, a piton with a ring at the top, but no rope-loop. Messrs. Kirkpatrick, Hope and Wigner (*A.J.* 21, 456, and 22, 558)

[At the moment of going to press, appears a valuable monograph by M. Camille Blanchard, 'Le Refuge Lombard,' giving

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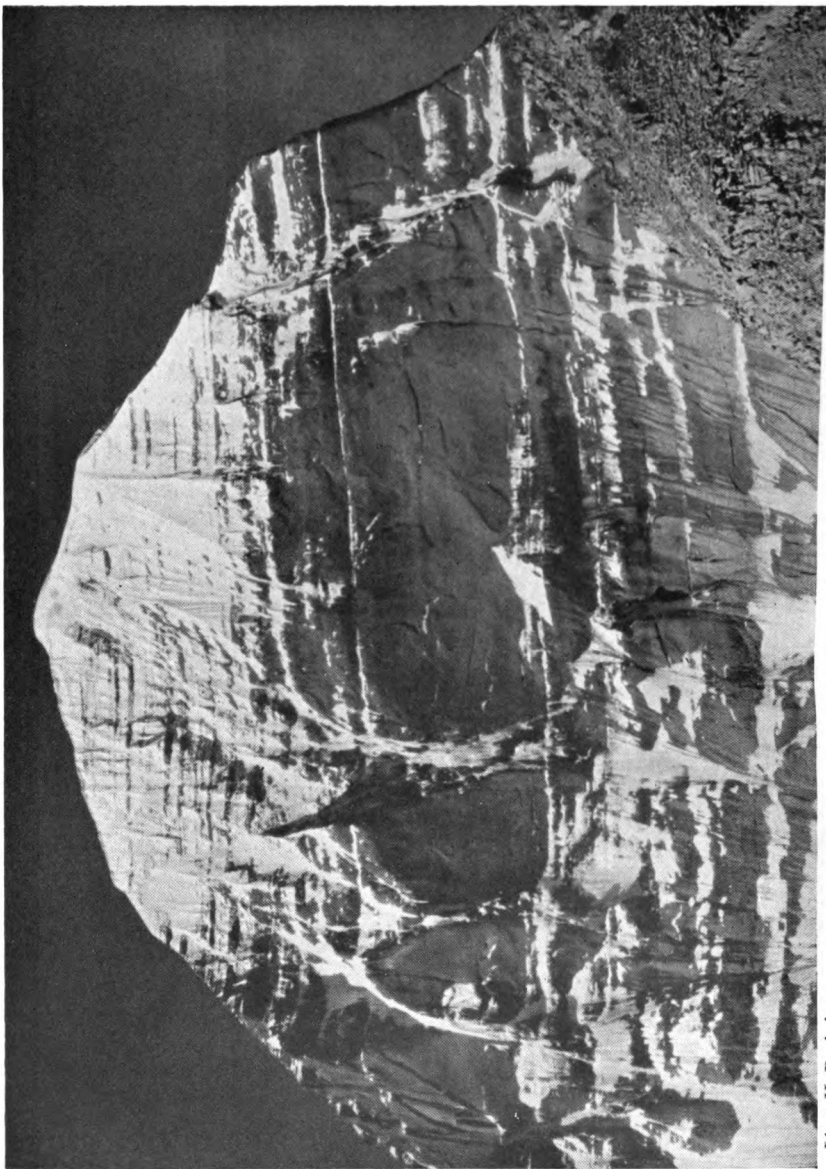
Oh! I thought you
w. be Thushow

H.W.



much useful information on the means of access to this hut as also the different routes to the Aiguilles d'Arves, etc.; there is

in 1902 found a fixed rope, but went up by the Thorant slab route, which they proclaim to be the most difficult rock climb of their experience. 'The ordinary way by which we descended,' they say,



Phot. H. Rutledge.

NORTH FACE OF KAILAS.

also an admirable photograph of the E. face of the Aiguille Méridionale. *La Montagne*, 1928, pp. 88-99.]

KAILAS PARBAT AND TWO PASSES OF THE
KUMAON HIMALAYA.

By R. C. WILSON.

[Mrs. Hugh Rutledge accompanied her husband on these expeditions, all of which were guideless.—*Editor*.]

KAILAS PARBAT.

ACCORDING to the map 'India and Adjacent Countries' Million Sheet No. 63 $\frac{1}{1,000,000}$ Kailas Parbat is 22,028 ft. in altitude. It stands up prominently in a massif of its own projecting S. from the Kailas range of the Himalayas, to which it is joined by the Dolma Pass ridge. The rough plan accompanying this note is an enlargement of the map, the ridges having been put in roughly by eye from a distance for

'scarcely seems difficult enough to justify the fixed rope which hangs there.' But of course everyone descends it on a rope; and the ascent is a question of danger rather than of difficulty. A slip by the leader, as Schulz said when they declined the risk, must be fatal to the whole party. In 1906 Mr. Clapham (*A.J.* 23, 583) found a fixed rope, but in 1907 M. Capdepon found none. Returning the following year, 1908, he found a "solide câble," while in 1909 he remarks on 'la minceur singulière du câble' (or was it a different rope?—C. W.). The last information I find is in M. Capdepon's paper (1910) (p. 344) and may be quoted at length.

'Aujourd'hui, un gros piquet de bois, planté horizontalement dans le surplomb au-dessus de la dalle, fait une prise de début. Et, depuis deux ans un câble court tout le long du passage. Le câble est une corde d'une bonne grosseur. Il est fixé au sommet par un solide anneau scellé dans le rocher; son extrémité inférieure est libre, mais, pour l'empêcher de flotter, on l'a attachée par une cordelette à un petit anneau fixé au roc. Ce n'est pas la première corde laissée en demeure sur les rochers du Mauvais Pas; mais les précédentes avaient été rapidement enlevées par les guides.'

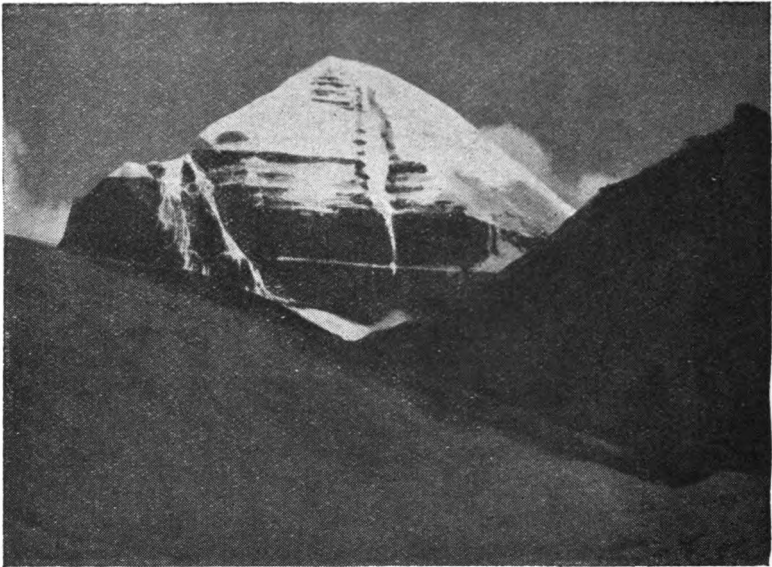
What may have happened since 1910 I cannot say.—C. W.

In early June 1897 there were, to the best of my recollection, a piton and short rope noose. It will be noticed that in 1899 Miss Bell makes no mention of either.—E. L. S.

24 *Kailas Parbat and Two Passes of the Kumaon Himalaya.*

the most part. It makes no pretence of accuracy, but it may be accepted that the general size and shape of the massif are as depicted and that the two main ridges running S.W. and S.E. from the summit do run roughly as shown.

As the birthplace of Shiva, the mountain takes a prominent place in Hindu and Bhuddist mythology, and an interesting account of it may be found in Sherring's 'Western Tibet and the British Borderland' (1906. *Arnold*, Chap. 14).



Photo, R. C. Wilson.]

SUMMIT OF KAILAS FROM THE S.

The mountain is best seen from a distance, and has the appearance of a somewhat lopsided white bowler placed on a square plinth of considerable steepness. As one approaches (from the S.) the summit is more and more concealed until one can only get an occasional glimpse of it between the ridges running down from the snow cap. This cap ends abruptly at the plinth and forms little or no glacier.

In July 1926, in company with Hugh Rutledge, Mrs. Rutledge and a party of Indian Bhotia traders, I arrived at Torchen, and after spending a day or two at that place awaiting the arrival of a dilatory Tibetan official we were ready on July 22 to start on the tour of Kailas—the normal

pilgrimage of those with sins to be forgiven. I was not much attracted by the prospect of a long march to Diriphu Monastery, our first halt, and enquired of a local priest as to the possibility of taking a short cut over the W. shoulder. He informed me that the plan was quite a possible one, and I consequently arranged to start next morning with Satan, an Everest porter of some experience. The Rutledges were unfortunately tied down to the usual route. In the evening the lama returned to say that at our previous interview he had been drunk and that there was no possibility of taking the line I wished. My experience of lamas being strictly limited, it seemed quite possible that his information when drunk was as likely to be accurate as when sober, and I made no change in my plan.

Next morning, therefore, Satan and I started for Kyangda Monastery, intending to find our way from there to the foot of the plinth and, skirting this between a very prominent gendarme and the main peak, to drop down as near as possible on to Diriphu Monastery at the W. base of the mountain.

We passed close to Kyangda, and escaped from the basin in which it stands by a col to the N., whence we reached the foot of B (see Plan) without loss of altitude and made up the valley towards the mountain, leaving the ridge HB on our right.

This valley is narrow, dark and steep ; there are occasional signs of a shepherd's track. The photo was taken from farther up than the entrance to this valley.

In due course we arrived at the head of the valley and found a *cul de sac*. In front towered the almost perpendicular 'plinth,' black and forbidding. On our right, at H, the point at which ridge HF springs from the 'plinth,' was a small glacier which reached the valley in the form of fragments of ice and snow. On the left leading up to the gendarme G was a shale slope as steep as any I have met. At the foot of the plinth to our front was the fan of snow, which had fallen from the snow gully which is such a prominent mark on the centre of the summit cap. To the right of this fan and between it and the débris of the tiny glacier was a niche, attainable by a scramble over these débris and probably partly natural and partly artificial. This niche contained a row of clay votive tablets, no doubt placed there by the lamas of Kyangda.

It was from there that we first noticed the very marked flattening of the S.E. ridge of the snow cap, the difference of the angle being very clearly shown in the photograph.

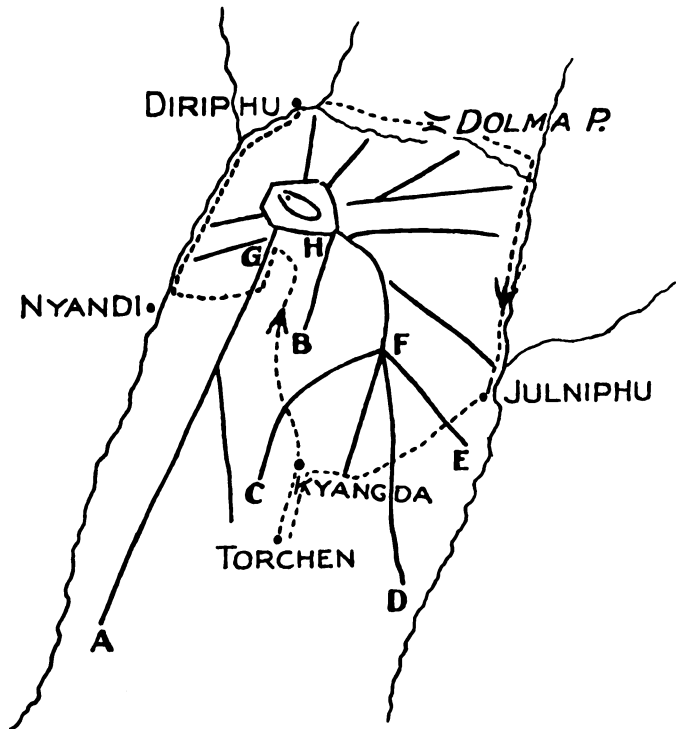
It was also apparent that the flat continuation of this ridge

26 *Kailas Parbat and Two Passes of the Kumaon Himalaya.*

could be attained by a short if steep and not too simple climb at H.

The result of these observations was sufficiently obvious to

KAILAS



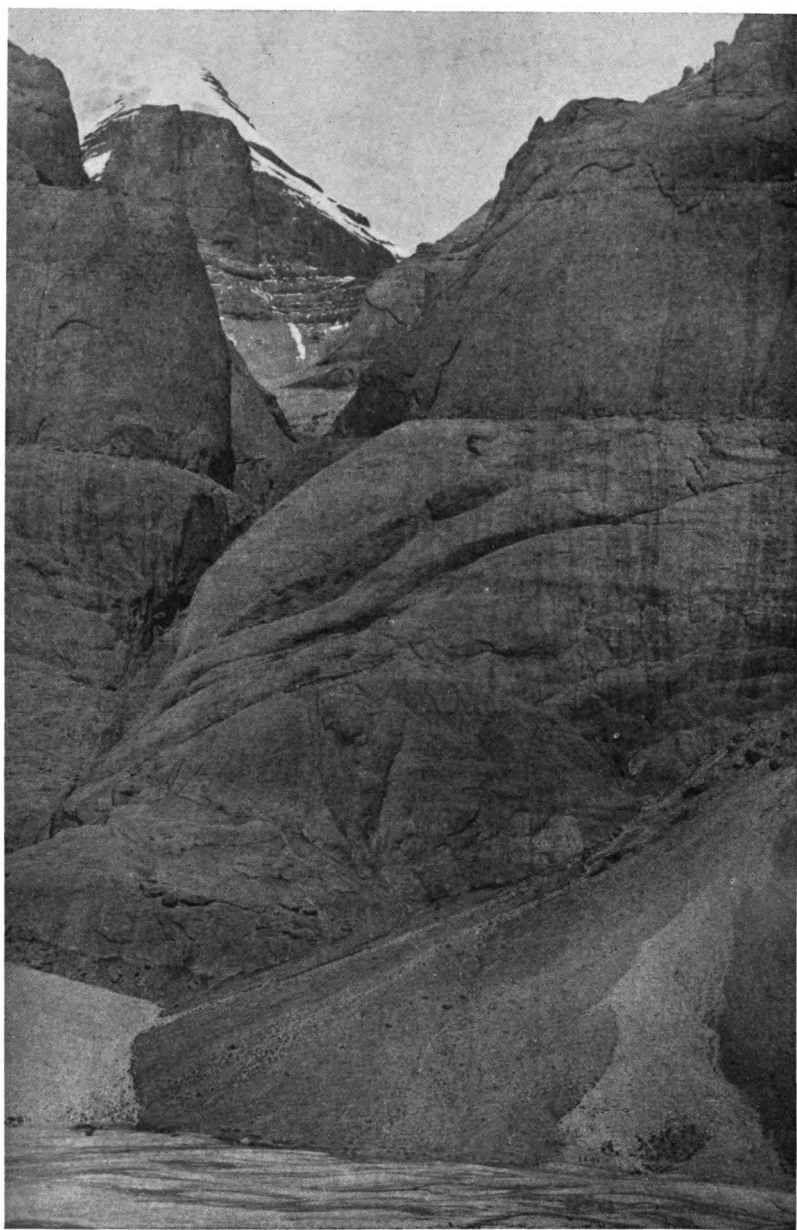
Scale $\frac{1}{250,000}$

Dotted lines indicate the writer's routes.

cause Satan to exclaim 'Sahib, we can climb that'—meaning the whole ridge to the summit.

He was right, but unfortunately time was lacking.

We turned left therefore and tackled the shale slope leading to the gendarme. We tried it at every angle, but no sooner did one place a foot on the treacherous surface than it began to move, and our progress was desperately slow and tiring.



Phot. H. Rutledge.

BASE OF KAILAS FROM WEST.

To make matters worse it began to snow, and suddenly without preliminary warning of any sort came a brilliant flash of lightning and a shattering crash of thunder immediately over our heads. Truly the gods were resenting our intrusion, and in the hopes of escaping their further attentions we placed our ice-axes at a safe distance and sat down to await the passing of the storm.

It was probably an hour and a half later that we achieved the col between the gendarme and the plinth.

Above us the mountain was almost perpendicular, while below was a pitch-black abyss of incredible depth and steepness, quite the most awesome place I have ever looked into. The sides were partly slaty black shale and partly snow—black with the dust and débris of the plinth above: I think that neither of us would have placed a foot on the treacherous surface for all the precious metal and stones of which the mountain is said to be made. Some other way down had to be found, however, and, apart from the way we had come up, the S.W. ridge offered the only solution.

We had attained this ridge up steep shale from the E. and had found the other side perpendicular or almost so. Looking back along the ridge there was, about a mile off, a spot at which it made a slight bend: at once our side became perpendicular and its summit assumed a cap of snow with overhanging cornice on our side. In the hopes that this indicated a more reasonable slope on the W. side we made for it, poked a hole in the overhang and pushed and pulled each other up. The surmise was correct, and we had an easy descent for many hundred feet. The final drop into the valley was sensational in appearance, but straightforward in actual practice.

That night we rejoined the Ruttledges and slept at Diriphu, and the next night at Julniphu, whence we returned to Torchen via Kyangda.

As one follows the track round the mountain it is difficult to see anything of the approaches thereto except on the N.W. I did, however, see enough to obtain a pretty good idea as to the best line of advance to the summit. Should fate again take me to Torchen with a couple of days to spare, I should make for the ridge HF, moving either round the foot of D or via Kyangda and over the ridge FD. I should expect to get on to the ridge HF about point F and to have an easy passage to the foot of the final ascent. A reasonably comfortable camp could be made here and the carriers sent down again to the foot of F for the night.

Next day the carriers could return to H and remove the camp to the foot of F, whilst the climbers went to the top and back. As regards altitudes, Torchen is probably about 15,500 ft., point H about 20,000, and the summit 22,028.

The photograph shows the final slope to be reasonable, though the snow might be found powdery and treacherous.

Should the route suggested above prove impracticable, an alternative line to point H would be to leave C and the ridge HB on one's right and to trust to finding a way up on to H from near the foot of the mountain where the small glacier falls into the valley and the niche with images has been made.

In this event one would have to be content with a light camp, as the climb to H might prove too much for laden carriers.

Finally, there remains a third possible route: to get on to the long N. ridge somewhere near the Dolma Pass.

[Mr. and Mrs. Ruttledge are the first Europeans to make the *parikarma* or traditional pilgrimage round this very celebrated mountain. Colonel Commandant Wilson is the first European actually to set foot on the mountain, and we are fortunate to have his very complete and valuable reconnaissance on record in this JOURNAL.—T. G. L.]

TWO PASSES OF THE KUMAON HIMALAYA.

[The altitudes given in this account cannot be guaranteed. They are based on the reports of earlier climbers, the figures given in the G.T.S. maps, the readings of a pocket aneroid and calculations made with an Abney level. The Ralam Pass is probably 18,500 ft. (Smyth gave 19,000) and Traill's Pass rather lower, possibly 18,000.]

The Himalayan frontier of India from Kashmir to Assam is, except in one or two stretches, occupied by Indian States. Of the British territory the most easily accessible, as well as the most interesting to the mountaineer, is Kumaon, which lies N.E. of Delhi. Kumaon comprises two Himalayan districts, Garhwal and Almora, and contains some of the finest peaks in the world. The Garhwal Peaks from Kamet (25,447) to Trisul (23,360) have been explored and described by Doctor T. G. Longstaff¹ and others,² as has Nanda Devi (25,660) on the dividing line between the two districts, the highest moun-

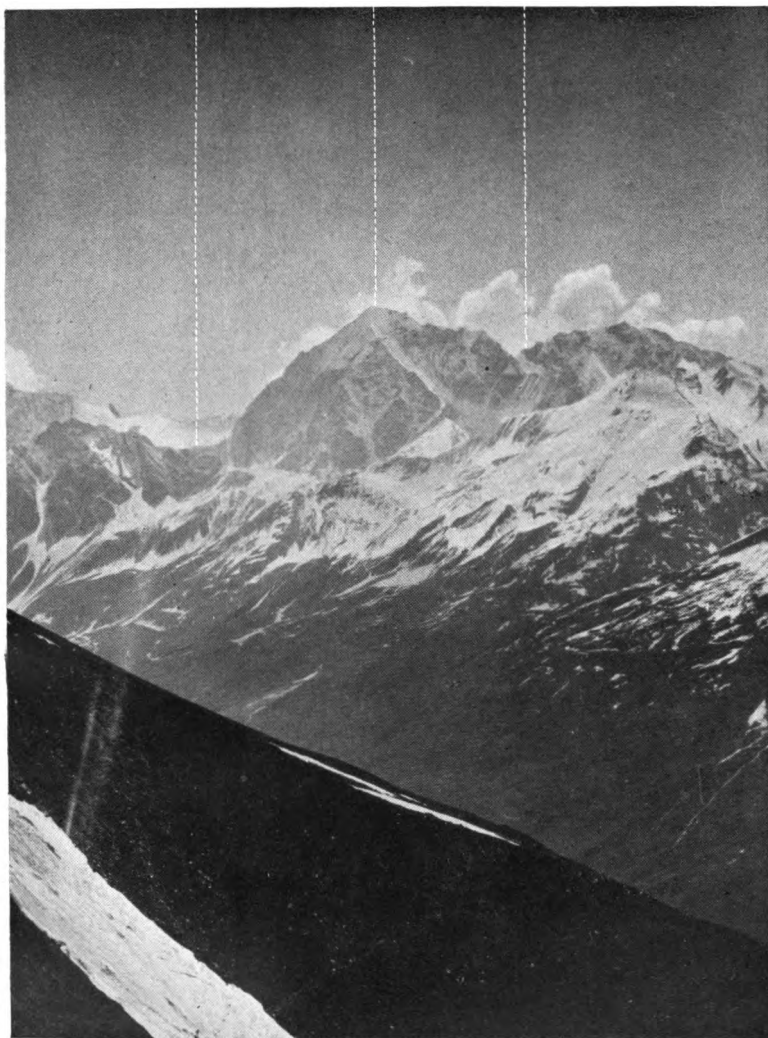
¹ *A.J.* 23, 202-223; 24, 107-133.

² Graham, *A.J.* 12, 25-60.

POINT SHOWN AS RALAM PASS
ON G.T.S. MAP

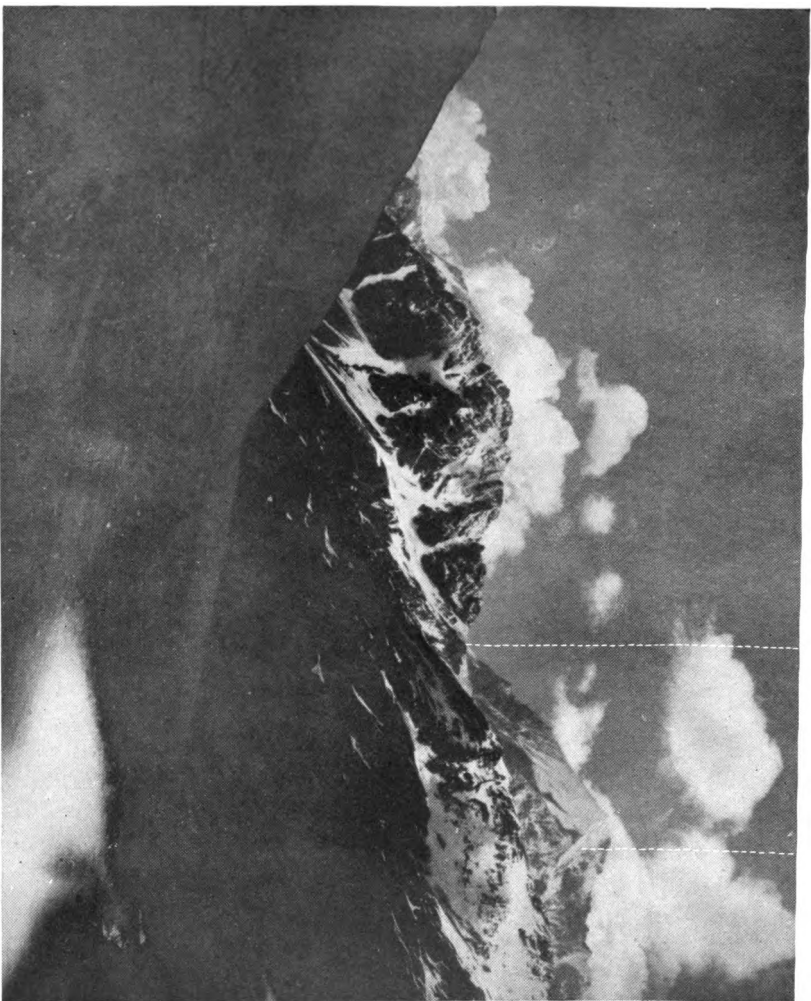
20,980

SECOND PASS



Phot. R. C. Wilson.

VIEW FROM FIRST PASS SHOWING THE SECOND PASS.



Phot. R. C. Wilson.

THE SECOND OR "INTERMEDIATE" PASS.

tain of the British Empire and one of the least accessible in the world, by reason of its encircling rampart of peaks, nowhere less than 19,000 ft., with but one passage through it, and that an impassable river gorge.

The peaks of Almora, except Nandakot, are less well known, but no less worthy of notice. As the passes which form the subject of this paper lie wholly within the Almora district, a word as to the geography of this area would not be amiss. The N. boundary is the Zaskar Range of the Himalaya, beyond which lies Tibet. This range throws off subsidiary ridges which get higher as they progress southward and finally fall again to the foothills and plains of India. It is with the two highest of these ridges that we are concerned. The most westerly forms the right bank of the Milam glacier and attains its maximum elevation at Nanda Devi (25,660), from where it divides into two arms, one terminating at Trisul (23,860) and the other at Nanda Kot (22,580). Between these two arms lies the Pindari glacier. Flowing from the Milam glacier and draining the E. face of this ridge runs the Gori Ganga river, whose E. or left bank is bounded by the second of our two ridges. This ridge, starting at the Unthadhura Pass, culminates in the group of peaks known as Panch Chulha, 22,661—the Five Fire-places (of the Gods).

Communications between the Gori Ganga valley and the outside world are confined to the river itself; upstream over the Unthadhura-Jainti and Kungri-Bingri Passes into Tibet; and downstream, by way of the river gorge, to India. There are no apparent passes to the E. or W. over the formidable barriers presented by the two ridges described above, but local tradition backed by the meagre records left by early climbers proves that at least one in each direction does, in fact, exist. It was to test the reliability of these statements that a climbing party, consisting of Mr. H. Rutledge of the Indian Civil Service, Mrs. Rutledge, Major T. C. Carfrae, R.F.A., and the writer, visited these parts in May 1925. Their ignorance of Himalayan conditions turned the expedition of that year into a reconnaissance, but the time was not entirely wasted, and it was the knowledge thus gained which enabled them to repeat their visit in 1926 with sufficient confidence to ensure the successful crossing of both passes.

In the early summer, 1926, the party, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Rutledge and the writer, was bound for Tibet on Government service and intended to use one of the main trade routes to that country. These routes follow the valleys running S.

from the frontier, and the party was faced with a long march from the W. of the district along the foothills to the E. valley they had selected for their route. It will be seen from the map that if the Pindari glacier could be reached and a route found from there into the Gori Ganga valley and thence into the Darma valley, a great deal of the tedious approach march would be avoided, and an opportunity afforded of exploring the passes which had excited their curiosity the year before.

The spring of 1926 was a very late one, and reports showed that in May, when the start was made, the Pindari valley was under deep snow as low as 11,000 ft. The programme was therefore modified and the ordinary route to the Gori Ganga was followed. June 13 found the party still too early at Martoli, their immediate work finished, and their next objective the Darma valley. The opportunity was too good to be missed, and in spite of the late snow it was decided to have a cut at the Ralam Pass.

I. The Ralam Pass (ca. 18,500 ft.).

This pass is not unknown, though it has been so seldom used as almost to merit this description. History, as written by Colonel Edmund Smyth,³ describes a crossing by that officer about 1861. Smyth's account of his adventures, chiefly due to avalanches, falling stones, and bad weather, as given to General Macintyre and related in 'The Hindu Koh,' is vivid if sketchy. Local tradition affirms that the pass was formerly used by the local Bhotias, and there are many who remember a climber, La Touche⁴ by name, who accomplished the passage some fifteen years ago. La Touche is said to have been a soldier or a geologist, but the evidence is strongly in favour of the latter theory, as he is chiefly remembered for his habit of smelling specimens of rock, a custom which is quite foreign to the Army. These crossings took place late in the year, and there was little enthusiasm among the local people to volunteer as porters as early as June.

It is clear from the map that between Martoli in the Gori valley and Sipu in the Darma there are three ridges to be crossed by three passes. The first is found behind the forbidding crags of the Haseling and Ralam Peaks and stands up clearly above Martoli; on the E. the ridge drops down steeply

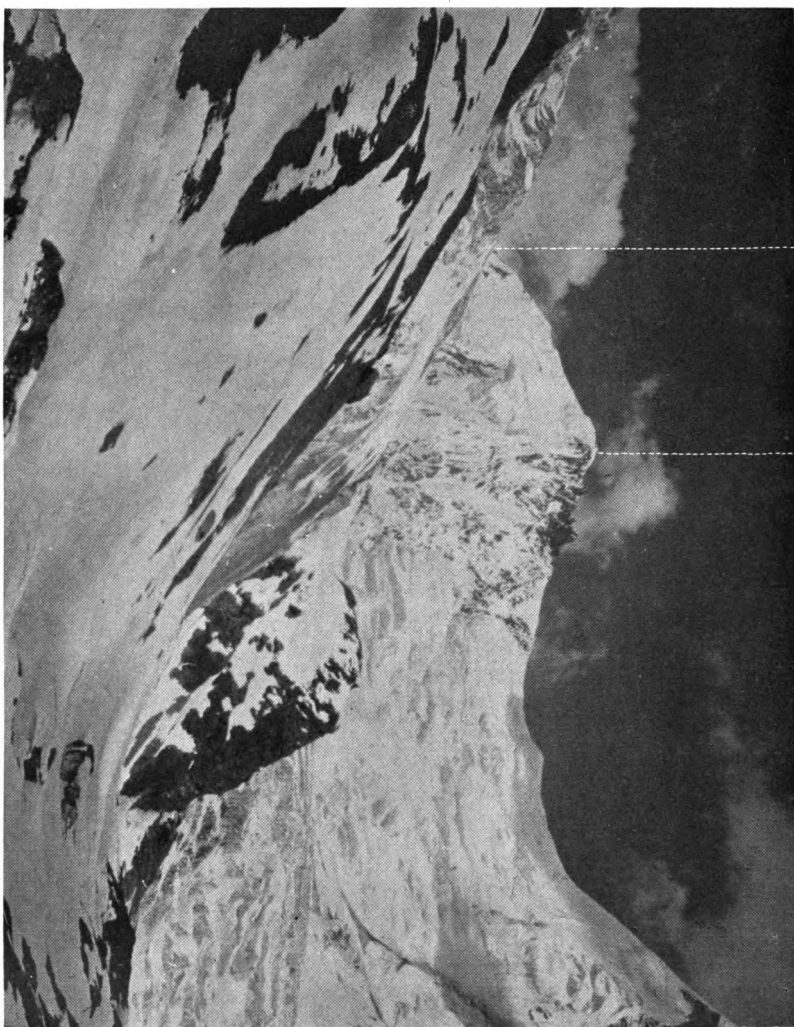
³ Colonel Edmund Smyth was in the first ascent of Monte Rosa, Höchstespitze, 1855.

⁴ Mr. T. D. La Touche, Geological Survey of India.—*T. G. L.*

POSITION OF MAIN
PASS

SHOULDER OF 21,366

SLOPE OF 21,360



Phot. R. C. Wilson.

THE FINAL BEND OF THE THERCHER GLACIER.



Phot. H. R. Rutledge.

MRS. RUTLEDGE AND COLONEL WILSON
at Thacher Glacier, N.

to the Ralam valley. This pass stands some 5000 ft. above the Gori Ganga river bed, or rather over 15,000 ft. in altitude. At the time of our start the last 2000 ft. or so was under deep snow.

We started on June 14 and camped that night on the edge of the snow below the first pass, at about 13,000 ft. Next day we were early on top in the hopes of a view of the subsequent route, about which we knew little or nothing at this stage. The view was very fine as a spectacle and sufficient could be seen to establish two points. Firstly, that the second or intermediate ridge could be crossed by either of two passes of about 16,000 ft. ; and secondly, that the main or Ralam Pass itself was not to be found in the position in which marked on the map. We were left guessing as to the actual situation of this main pass which was invisible.

At Ralam village we were so very lucky as to find a Bhotia who claimed to have crossed the pass some fourteen years before, who was ready with a little persuasion to go again and who had a sufficiency of 'nephews' to act as porters. He gave the following information in reply to our questions : The second pass, of which we had had a glimpse, was the best one to follow. The drop on the far side to the Thercher glacier was short but 'khara' (steep). The Thercher glacier was 'maidan' (flat), at first, after which it became very 'khara' and finally 'salami' (moderate) to the foot of the pass, which was itself 'khara' but short. He was distinctly vague as to the way down on the far side, except that it was long and subject to falling stones.

The arrangements at Ralam had delayed us for a day, and it was not until June 17 that we got off. That night we camped at the foot of the snow line on the second pass at an altitude of 13,000 ft. or thereabouts. As some 3000 ft. remained to the second pass, an early start was made on the morning of June 18 and the first 1000 ft. quickly overcome. Next the snout of a small but steep glacier was crossed and the hill-side again reached. Here the choice lay between snow couloirs and loathsome arêtes of rotten rock and shale. As the former had all the appearance of stone chutes, the latter were preferred, and after much tedious scrambling these led on to a fairly steep snow slope which occupied the final 800 ft. to the pass. The climbing party made the necessary steps up this slope and sent down one member to help bring up the porter's rope. The top was reached at 10.30 without incident.

Immediately below, perhaps 400 ft. down, was the gently sloping Thercher glacier running N. and S. until hidden

towards the S. by an arête running down from the shoulder of 20,980 on the opposite bank; from this arête to the lower slopes of 21,360 stretched an icefall which blocked the view farther up the glacier. To reach the pass, which, although still invisible, it was assumed would be found round the S. bend of the glacier, it would be necessary to circumvent this icefall. The arête from the shoulder of 20,980 offered a possible solution of the problem.

After a meal on top of the pass, the party glissaded or rolled, according to their skill or inclination, down to the glacier, up which they made their way for a couple of easy miles to the foot of the icefall. As time was getting on and the weather threatening, advantage was taken of a small dry patch of medial moraine on which to pitch the tents at an altitude of about 16,000 ft.

It snowed that evening, sufficiently to make a reconnaissance of to-morrow's route too unprofitable a job, and we turned in without having succeeded in getting a view of our pass and with no exact idea as to where it was. The more immediate problem, however, was how to circumvent the icefall which, as described above, appeared to cut off access to the upper reaches of the glacier. The most obvious route skirted under an ice cliff and across some fair rocks, and this made an early start advisable, a plan which proved successful and which brought us on the morning of June 19, before sunrise, to the top of the icefall and at long last within sight of our pass. In front of us was three-quarters of a mile of easy glacier, followed by a rise to the pass of some 800 ft. of pretty steep snow cut off by a bergschrund. On the right, the débris of many avalanches from the shoulder of 21,360 had filled this sufficiently to make a safe passage if used before the sun reached that mountain, and so the party moved without delay across the glacier and halted the porters in safety whilst the climbers made the necessary steps. A few stretches of ice made progress slow, and it was with a feeling of relief that the party reached a sheltered rib of rock where the porters could join them without being delayed *en route*. The rest of the way to the top was plain sailing over snow at a reasonable angle and in good condition.

Some of the younger porters suffered badly from mountain sickness on the way up, which surprised us, as the maximum altitude was about 18,500 ft. and they are accustomed to live permanently at over 11,000 and must attain 18,000 ft. every year when crossing into Tibet. We ascribed their trouble to

the snow, to which they are unaccustomed. All recovered when 2000 ft. of the descent had been accomplished.

The E. side of the ridge was either heavily corniced or very steep for the first few feet of the descent, and this combined with the sickness and general clumsiness of Indian hillmen on snow, and their unfamiliarity with the use of the rope, caused the first 200 ft. of the descent to be fraught with excitement, many of the porters arriving at an outcrop of rock at the foot completely out of control. Luckily no damage was done, but the experience rather cramped the style of the party and led to considerable *détours* to avoid any further adventures on steep snow.

We kept to the left bank of the Nipchungkang glacier to avoid two icefalls which were just discernible through the mist at a considerably lower altitude; and after crossing innumerable ridges and ribs of rotten rock finally found one of sound material which led on to the dry ice at the foot of the lowest icefall. A flat-topped medial moraine carried on the good work for another mile or more, after which a scramble over the stone-covered junction of the two glaciers brought us to the left bank of the combined stream, where we camped for the night. A couple of inches of snow during the night added to nobody's comfort, and this was followed next morning by a tramp to Sipu, where the inhabitants received us with considerable surprise and hospitality, to say nothing of an entirely correct action in offering a drink.

II. Traill's Pass (ca. 18,000 ft.).

This pass lies W. of Martoli in the Gori Ganga valley and between Nanda Devi (25,660) and Nanda Kot (22,530); it has an interesting history.

The first Commissioner of Kumaon, Mr. Traill, conceived the idea in 1880 of opening communications between the Pindari valley and that of the Gori Ganga by using the pass, which even in those early days had for long been in disuse and whose existence was little more than a local tradition. Equipped with tools and planks and an army of workmen, he built over the grass slopes on the right bank of the Pindari glacier a three-foot track, of which signs remain to this day at infrequent intervals.

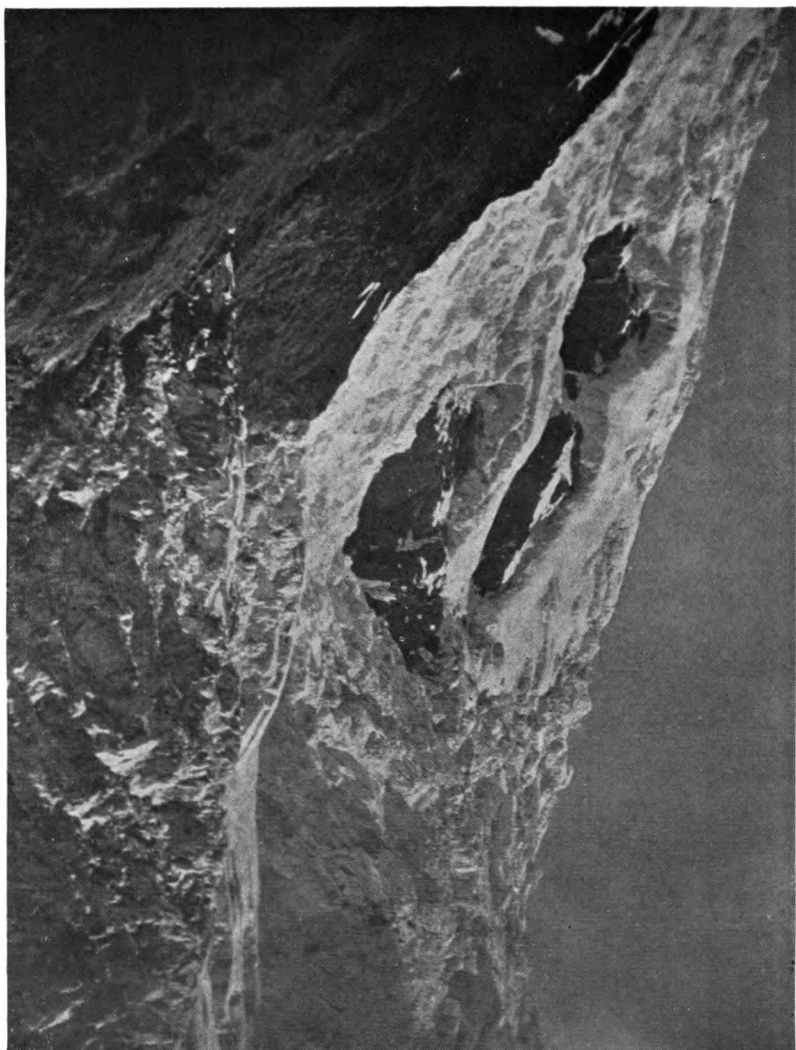
Higher up he took to the glacier, and his subsequent adventures are wrapped in mystery, except that he found the glacier flat and easy. He was followed in 1855 by Adolph

Schlagintweit ⁵ and in 1861 by Colonel (then Captain) Edmund Smyth. In 1888 T. S. Kennedy set out with the intention of trying the pass, but gave up the attempt, and in 1898 Dr. K. Boeck also gave up the attempt on hearing that the retreat of the glacier had made the way impracticable. All these crossings were from W. to E., and there is no record of any passage in the opposite direction. They have other points in common ; all followed the right bank of the Pindari glacier—in every case the last camp was probably a certain cave said by Schlagintweit to be 14,180 ft.—from here all followed a side glacier and from it crossed a col (Schlagintweit 17,770) and so into the upper névé basin of the Pindari glacier, whence the pass was reached without difficulty. All seem to have found the E. side of the pass steep, and Smyth, in particular, had considerable difficulty in descending to the Lwanl glacier.

As related above, our intention was to follow in the footsteps of these early pioneers. In 1925 (64 years after the last crossing) we arrived at the Pindari in May, crossed the glacier about a mile from the snout, found Schlagintweit's cave and signs of Traill's path and reached the col, from which our predecessors had attained the névé basin. Here our successes ended in bad weather, but it was quite obvious that the glacier could no longer be joined at the col. To do so would have involved a nasty descent to the glacier, which would have been met at a point in the middle of the icefall and several hundred feet below the 'almost flat' névé basin. The only alternative would have been to go very much higher over a ridge running due E. from 21,624, in the hopes that, at the altitude thus attained, the glacier would be found more accommodating. In the same year we managed to get our first glimpse of the pass from the Lwanl, sufficient to enable a route over the lower slopes to be chosen and to confirm the previous reports of its steepness.

In 1926, after crossing the Ralam Pass in mid-June, we spent four weeks in Tibet, and arrived once more at Martoli in the Gori Ganga valley on our way back to India on August 8. Having been frustrated by the snow earlier in the year, we had decided to make another attempt, this time from the E., should the monsoon prove amenable. The party consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Rutledge and the writer. On August 9 the weather was by no means good, but was voted good enough, and we slept that night at the snout of the Lwanl glacier at

⁵ *A.J.* 12, 31-32.

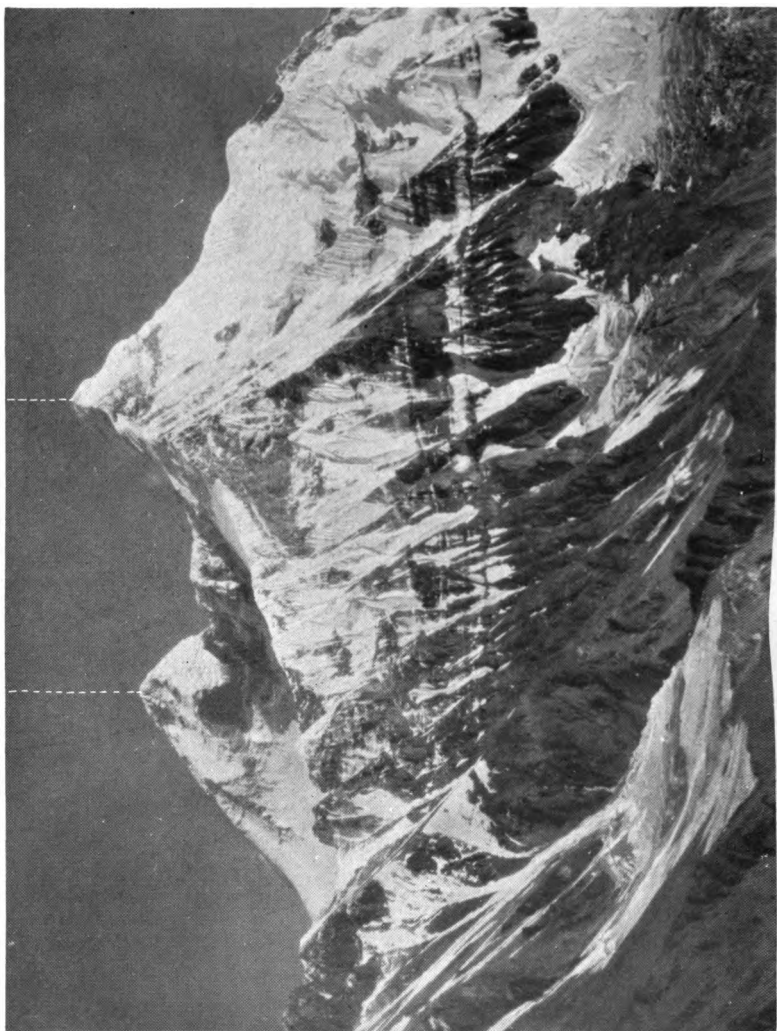


Phot. R. C. Wilson.

THE PINDARI ICE-FALL FROM BELOW.

MAIN PEAK
23,660

E. PEAK
24,379



Phot. R. C. Wilson.

NANDA DEVI
from Trail's Pass.

14,100 ft. Sufficient rain fell during the afternoon and night to make us somewhat apprehensive for the next day.

Our next camp on August 10 was at 16,700, some 2000 ft. below the ridge joining the N.W. shoulder of Nanda Kot (20,740) and the pass and about mid-way between these two points. To reach this spot we had followed the left bank of the Lwanl glacier for two and a half miles, crossed the flat valley and stream which flows E. from the foot of Nanda Devi E. peak 24,879, and climbed the centre one of three ridges running down from between the N.W. shoulder 20,740 and the pass. This glacier flows N.W., and before reaching the pass falls rapidly for 1000 ft.

There were three courses open to us :

(a) To follow the small glacier N.W., descend to 15,700 ft. at the foot of the pass, and then climb 2000 ft. to the pass.

(b) To cross the glacier at our level and traverse to the right along the face of the ridge, rising 1000 ft. in the half-mile which separated us from the pass.

(c) To cross the glacier and reach the ridge joining 20,740 and the pass at a point immediately above us ; a climb of some 2000 ft.

After due deliberation (a) and (b) were ruled out, the former as being too long and the latter too uncertain, and we concentrated on the selection of the most suitable line of attack on the 2000 ft. of ridge in front of us. There were two suitable ribs running down on the far side of the glacier ; both were steep and consisted of shale for a third of the distance, after which the one on the left became snow-covered, and that on the right a firmer looking species of shale. The right-hand rib was selected, not because it was the easier—indeed the way up the last 200 ft. was by no means clear, as the strata became very definitely against the climber—but by reason of the very indifferent performances previously put up by the porters on steep snow, they were more likely to be at home on rock however constituted.

On the morning of August 11, therefore, we made our way across the glacier and started up the ridge, keeping to the snow until the porters showed signs of distress. We then took to our rib, and a tedious scramble followed until the strata became very definitely against us. About this time an alternative presented itself, consisting of a level traverse of 300 yds. to the right to meet the top of the ridge, where it began to fall towards the pass. It was not easy going, as the slabs of slatelike material were superimposed on each other with the

higher one overlapping the lower. It was found, however, that at the junction the lower slabs had somewhat disintegrated, and by chipping away the soft material an edge was produced with the appearance of the pages of a closed book which afforded a reasonably secure foothold.

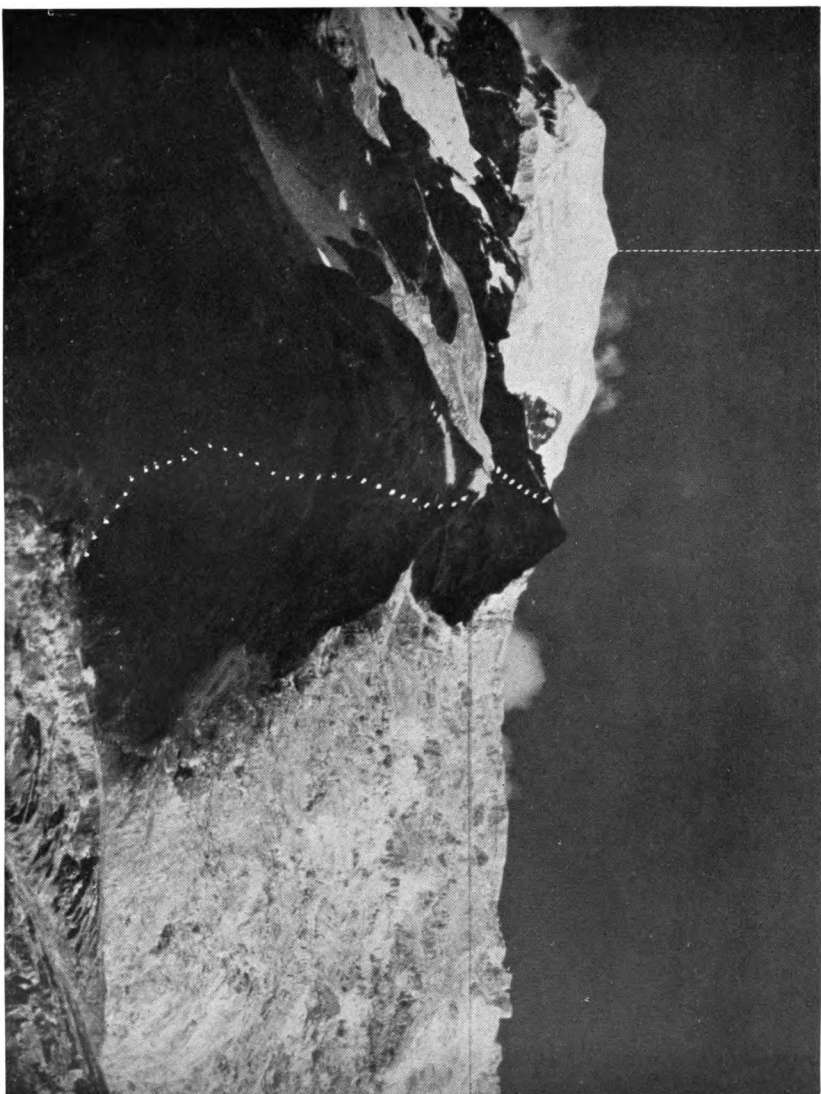
From the top of the ridge we followed the crest and descended obliquely to the W. side of the pass, whence the upper névé basin of the Pindari was easily reached. This basin is enclosed on the S. by two ridges, one long and fairly level running E. from 21,624, the other very steep, running W. from the N.W. shoulder of Nanda Kot, 20,740. Glaciers fall steeply from the two peaks on the N. side of these two ridges, and sweeping S. round their lower extremities join the main Pindari icefall, the upper edge of which overlaps both ridges.

From the pass we could see sufficient of this to realize that whereas our predecessors, coming from below, had reached the névé basin round the E. point of the ridge from 21,624, we could not now adopt their route, but must perforce cross the ridge considerably higher, at a point above the main fall and below the broken ice flowing down from 21,624. We therefore went S.W. from the pass for $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles across the névé basin, keeping well over towards the base of 21,624. The going was good and level for the first mile, after which the glacier became undulating and broken in the area between the top of the Pindari icefall and the foot of that flowing down from 21,624. In due course we arrived at the top of the ridge running down from that mountain and could look down into the cloud-filled Pindari valley.

The descent from this ridge was 800 ft. of real abomination. It is composed of rock in every stage of decay and looseness. To avoid dislodging the horrible stuff was almost an impossibility. The Bhotia porters made very heavy weather of it, and one rope had to be left at the top until the other had accomplished the 800 ft. to the glacier at the foot. Even so the porters' slowness in crossing a snow couloir at the bottom involved them in a shower of rocks and stones of all sizes, luckily without damage.

From the foot to Schlagintweit's col is a short distance, and once the col was crossed our troubles were at an end. We had reconnoitred as far as this in the opposite direction the year before, and had left a cairn to mark the correct ridge, which is the centre one of three joining at or near the col.

Having obligingly allowed us to cover the difficult part of



Phot. R. C. Wilson.

PEAK 21,624 AND UPPER ICE FALL OF PINDARI GLACIER,
showing descent by central rock rib.

COL.



Phot. R. C. Wilson.

ROUTE UP TRAILL'S PASS,
from N.

our journey unmolested, the weather now decided to turn against us, and we were glad to reach the cave of our predecessors in a steady drizzle at 6 p.m. and to settle down there for the night. On the morning of August 12 we crossed the Pindari glacier between the two icefalls and followed the track on the left moraine to Phurkia dak bungalow.

Traill's Pass, in common with most Himalayan passes, is long; it has a distinctly awkward stretch on the E. and an unpleasant ridge overlooking the Pindari glacier. I venture to prophesy, however, that the feature which will give most trouble to future climbers will be the attainment of (or exit from) the S. edge of the névé basin of the Pindari glacier. One hundred years ago it was possible to reach this basin at an altitude of 17,000 ft. or thereabouts—to-day one can only do so 1000 ft. higher. Should the Pindari glacier icefall recede still more it will connect up with the subsidiary fall from 21,624 and a way through will require careful search and considerable labour.

In this crossing, the first for 64 years and the first ever made from E. to W.,⁶ we were lucky in the weather; the climbing season in the Himalayas is normally limited to the months of June and July, between the melting of the winter snow and the monsoon rains. Traill's Pass is on the main chain of the Himalayas and gets no protection from the monsoon clouds; we had no right to expect the perfect day we experienced when high up. Had it been otherwise it might have become a matter of some difficulty to find one's way, even now, off the Pindari névé basin.

THE GODFATHERS OF FORTUNATUS.

By R. L. G. IRVING.

THIS is not an attempt to convert the ALPINE JOURNAL into a magazine of fiction. It is not one of those tall tales from the plains in which mountain adventures are viewed through glasses of the kind which enabled Dr. Cook to see himself on the top of Mt. McKinley and, later, at the North Pole. It is a plain tale from the hills of things that might happen to any member of the Club and which did happen to one.

⁶ And the first ever made by a lady.—*Editor.*

And if the tale is an acknowledgment of a debt to Fortune and not a record of achievement, the creditor is one whom all climbers will be glad to have propitiated. Any man who has climbed actively for more than 20 years, especially if he has indulged in guideless or solitary expeditions above the snow-line without a single serious accident to himself or his companions, may be forgiven if he claims to call himself Fortunatus. If he is still able to receive from snow mountains what they began to give him 30 years ago, the title is unquestionably his.

The rewards a man gets from mountaineering depend greatly on the way in which he regards mountains, and this is a matter of temperament. Temperament in mountaineering would be an interesting subject for a paper, but it would make many demands on the skill of the writer, and our Fortunatus has no more to do with the Fortunatus of the Muses than he has with that other Fortunatus described in the dictionary, the man 'in good circumstances, rich.'

The past favours of Fortune here described, being free and unexpected, an entirely unearned increment to mountaineering revenue, are peculiarly pleasant to acknowledge, however devoid of interest the manner of their winning may be to others.

None of the more cinematographic episodes in Fortunatus' career have been chosen, though Fortune has been known to tighten his grip of the ice-axe while his feet awaited contact with the lower portions of a crevasse, and to steer a shower of stones clear of his ill-sheltered body. He has chosen cases in which the grip of the mountain has closed gently and inexorably upon him till he has felt his helplessness and then seen Fortune release him with a smile, and one case in which Fortune has shown what a delightful companion she can be even when Tragedy is far away.

I.

One fine morning in April, very early in the present century, Fortunatus set out to climb the Taillon, which, as very few schoolboys and not all the members of the Alpine Club know, is a peak of over 10,000 ft. in the central chain of the Pyrenees above Gavarnie. It was an Easter when the snow under clear skies was exceptionally good. His intention was to ascend by the N. and descend by the E. ridge, continuing the traverse as far as he could before returning to Gavarnie.

A storm came up from the S. as he was nearing the summit, and he hurried down the E. ridge, looking for the first practic-

able point at which to leave it. The little he could see of the icy precipices on the N. was utterly repellent. He came to a point where it was easy to reach, on the S. side, a slope of snow that merged into the grey wall of mist and led down into Spain, altogether a beguiling slope combining immediate safety with adventure. No one worthy of the name Fortunatus could hesitate to trust himself to it. In a few minutes he was revelling in the long plunging strides that are almost effortless when the slope is sufficiently steep and the snow less than knee-deep. In the mist the occasional rocks and inequalities, magnified to immense proportions, appeared so suddenly and vanished behind him so quickly that he had the impression of flying down at enormous speed.

The slope continued to dip at an angle agreeable to tired legs, and preserved a monotony most reassuring to a mind disturbed by lightning-charged clouds. At first Fortunatus struck straight down, as the shortest way out of danger. His only guide as to direction was the impression left upon his memory by a small map in Joanne and the extremely sketchy suggestions of the French ordnance map. He did his best to check by reasoning the leagues in distance and the thousands of feet in height he seemed to have put between himself and the frontier ridge.

Gradually the crashes of thunder grew fainter as the area of storm was left behind. The hail ceased. The slope became less steep, and under the snow a hidden stream began to make its stifled gurgles heard. Every minute he was expecting to come out into the Val d'Arazas. When the unexpected happened, as it does to climbers, however often experience has warned them to expect it, it literally took his breath away.

A moment before it had been an effort to keep his senses awake while he watched for some change in the narrow, monotonous circle of mist and snow that seemed to cling round him as he moved. Then, with no more warning than a sudden infusion of warmer light into the greyness in front, the curtain went up.

Fortunatus found himself standing on the very brink of a cirque so wildly beautiful, so utterly different in fantastic grandeur to what he had expected to see, that he felt his whole being caught and shaken by the wonder of it. To right and left precipices of increasing depth ran out to two enormous bastions of rock that dominated the Val d'Arazas by thousands of feet. But it was the colour that held Fortunatus spell-bound. The vast cirque was glowing with orange and crimson

above, with dark velvety greens and purples below, as if all the passion of the South had surged up to melt the cold austerity of the snow. Colour is always vivid after storm, but its effect is most intense when seen by eyes that have been for hours confronted by a monochrome of whitish grey.

Fatigue also may act strangely on a man's perceptions. There are many times when it produces mere peevishness and insensibility to any form of beauty, to anything, in fact, but rest or food. But there are times when it merely draws all desire for action from the limbs and mind and leaves the latter acutely sensitive to beauty, and far more liable to fall under its spell. A whole leap year may be less dangerous to a bachelor than an hour of convalescence !

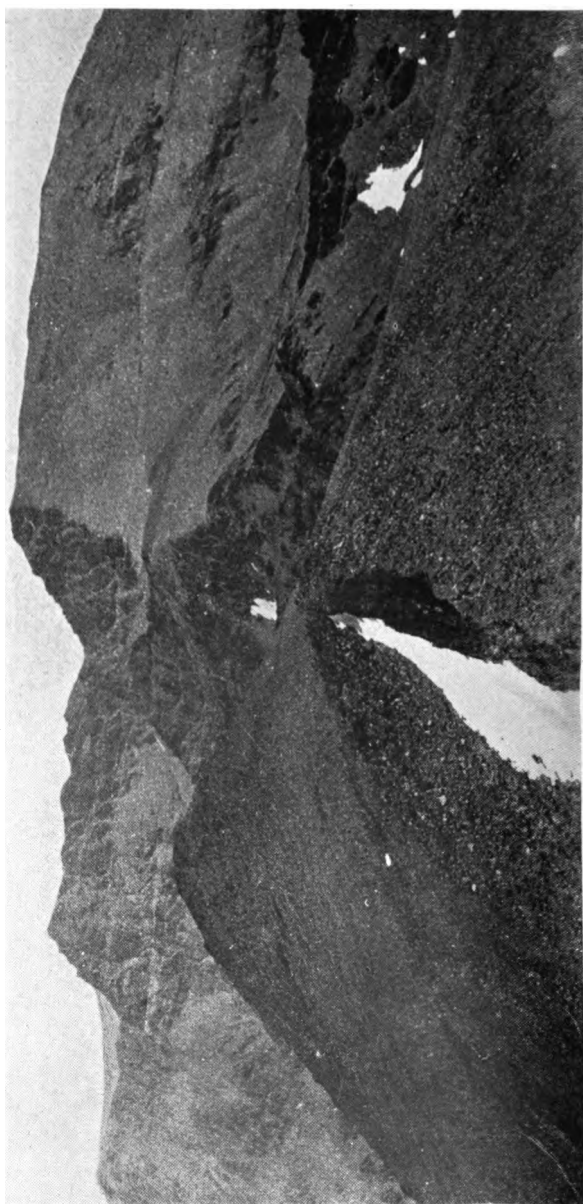
Immediately in front of Fortunatus the stream wriggled out of the snow and fell over the rim of the cirque. There the drop to practicable slopes below was least, but a single glance showed the intervening wall to be unclimbable. Now Fortunatus was not one of your fearless fellows who are undisturbed by such discoveries. Anticipations of a tragic nature were never far away in the hours before an arduous climb. And in that moment he saw his position clearly and the difficulty of escape. Yet the spell of the place was so strong upon him that he not only felt no fear, he felt the very will to escape weaken. He retained enough self-consciousness to check an inclination to open his arms in welcome to some strange delight, forcing himself to look back at the slopes he had just descended. He followed them in imagination under the clouds their long, weary length. Could he ever plod up there again with the hours of daylight and the strength that were left him ? Could he find a way over the main ridge if he did ? He turned away, content to let his eyes rest upon the unyielding but glorious and enchanting walls of his prison.

It was a dangerous moment for Fortunatus. The Greeks were right to be afraid of Pan. And in that moment his eye was caught by something that looked like a piton in the rocks below the rim on his right. The reader who knows the Pyrenees will exclaim from his arm-chair, ' Why, of course, one of the Buxtons had pitons put in there years before when chamois-hunting, to provide an exit from the cirque.' Quite true ! but to Fortunatus, at that moment, it was a miracle, the most dramatic thing that had ever happened to him. It changed the whole character of what he saw ; its beauty was no longer pagan ; something had come into it that restored his liberty of choice and made him feel ashamed. Rather like a



Phot. R. L. G. Irving.

LE TAILLON.



Phot. W. T. Elmslie.

ALCAZABA AND MULHACEN,
from Picacho de la Veleta.

child that has seen the smile of forgiveness in its mother's face, he made his way over to the piton, barely able to believe in its reality till he had touched it with his foot. It was a quite solid reality, the first of several that supplied what Nature had omitted in providing a descent till pines growing at all sorts of angles took the place of the steep rocks in alternately aiding and obstructing progress.

Daylight lasted long enough to let Fortunatus get round below the great western bastion into the Val d'Arazas. Fortune did not even refuse him a late supper and a bed in the old inn at Torla. Two days later, at Gavarnie, he learned the history of the pitons and the name of the cirque, Cotatuero, from Célestin Passet, famous among Pyrenean guides. It is a place that must at any time impress a man with any imagination ; it is the dramatic nature of his presentation to it that makes Fortunatus rank it first among the mountain godfathers to whom he owes his name.

II.

You must now picture Fortunatus starting at dawn from a miner's hut at the entrance to the long corral that runs up to the N. face of the Pico de Veleta. . Any map you have of the Sierra Nevada will confirm my statement that the Veleta is the one of the main peaks nearest to Granada and is about 11,400 ft. high ; it will probably tell you very little else.

The time was April, the day promised to be little better than the two days of bad weather which preceded it. Fortunatus had spent nearly a week in a sleeping bag on the side of the mountain 4 or 5 hrs.' walk above Granada without getting above 8000 ft. ; he had to do something to justify his existence as a mountaineer. A primitive man inhabiting a stone beehive, and quite grateful to be told the day of the week and month, had promised to take Fortunatus' sleeping bag and most of his valuables down to Granada.

Three men who looked as if they would much prefer brigandage to mining had supped in the hut and kept Fortunatus awake imagining various ways in which they might use a knife upon his person. He regretted he had not shown them that a handful of very dirty coppers was all he had left after he had paid his bill. He knew his clothes could not tempt them.

An extract from one of his first attempts to keep a diary will give an idea of the morning's progress. 'Struck up hillside on E. of stream and reached ridge without difficulty. Hopes

raised by occasional gleams of sunshine, but after 3 hrs.' going in variable fresh snow wind became bad and snow began to fall. Clouds came over the ridge at about 9000 ft. On nearing the main ridge some awkward bits occurred which were turned by traversing deep snow on the W. Close to the final peak where the ridge bent round above the corral more traversing over steep, bad snow. In summer this would probably be shale and quite easy. Every footstep started an avalanche, but by going close under the rocks at the top of the ridge and holding on to them it was possible to avoid going down with the snow. Ridge joined again just where it joins the main ridge connecting Veleta with Mulhacen. Wind and blinding snow made things hard for hands and eyes; gloves merely ice-bags. Consulted compass and attacked wall of rocks looming above in the mist. All holds filled with fresh snow.'

Murray's guide-book says of this face (presumably in summer) 'both difficult and dangerous, though not impossible to first-rate cragsmen.' Knowing on the authority of Professor Godley that an 'expert' after Baedeker was 'a man with nails in his boots,' it was not unreasonable, therefore, to conclude that a short experience plus the nails would make a 'first-rate cragsman' after Murray. There were one or two places where Fortunatus called himself a fool for being where he was, and though the climb is short he was not a little comforted when his nose touched a ledge of snow that proved to be the edge of the summit.

In front of him a slope of soft and rapidly deepening snow stretched away at an easy angle under the mist. He pulled out his compass to take his bearings. He had to avoid straying on to the N. face where a sheer drop of 2000 ft. would land him on the most southerly glacier in Europe, while his best direction lay a little N. of W. For convenience he put the compass back in an outside pocket. Alas! how many precious things have passed away out of that pocket. Even a camera and a biggish pot of honey have been known to find the through route. With a faint tinkle as it struck a patch of wind-swept snow it slid off to the right over that awful N. face. The one thing that could ensure direction was gone.

As he surveyed, as well as the driving flakes that stung his eyes would let him, the small circle of deep soft snow of which he was the centre, he realised that Solitude was in a very grim mood indeed. It was just the moment for Fortune to lend a hand, and she did so promptly, giving Fortunatus an extra buffet from the wind upon his cheek. Wind may be a

treacherous guide, but on that exposed peak, with nothing between him and Africa to turn it, it was likely to be steady in direction. The occasions when a climber is ready to bless the wind are rare, and this was one. Fortunatus pounded on, knee-deep in the snow, with the wind on his left cheek, hour after hour, in a cloud that was surprisingly dazzling to the eyes considering the amount of precipitation from it. At last there was a darkening of the baffling wall and a valley, desolate but clear, appeared below a ragged edge of cloud. In another hour a path, unspeakably stony but blessedly welcome, was reached. A mulberry tinge in the murky sky indicated that the sun was setting as he saw a still more welcome sight, a man driving cows. Fortune had been at his side and stuck to him. Soon after nightfall he reached a farm, and even there Fortune entered with him, securing him a welcome from hospitable folk, two or three lucky dips in the family dish of potatoes and beans with a plate all to himself, an orange treasured up from the previous summer and not entirely dry, and finally a bed on which he only heard and never felt the rats. For all this he had only his handful of coppers to offer and yet had difficulty in getting it accepted.

In the morning he found that Fortune had brought him down within a mile or so of the direct route from the summit to Granada, and best of all he found there that the primitive man had faithfully delivered his possessions at the hotel. He may have had a painful attack of snow-blindness from the hours spent in the clouds when the driving snow prevented the use of glasses; he may have missed his ship at Gibraltar owing to there being no train for about 30 hours. These are trifles. The Veleta is one of his godfathers who counts.

III.

One other godfather only can be mentioned. It is hard to pass over the claims of Mont Blanc and the Roccià del Abisso; but youth will be served, and Fortunatus' choice falls upon the youngest, the simple, unexciting Lötschenlücke. The name has nothing to do with his choice, though Fortunatus on a mountain is capable of such a thing.

Many good days have commonplace beginnings, and this was one of them. After a large breakfast, at a late hour in the morning, Fortunatus left Concordia in the company of many friends, all young enough to be his sons or daughters, though he could only claim that relationship with one. Fortune

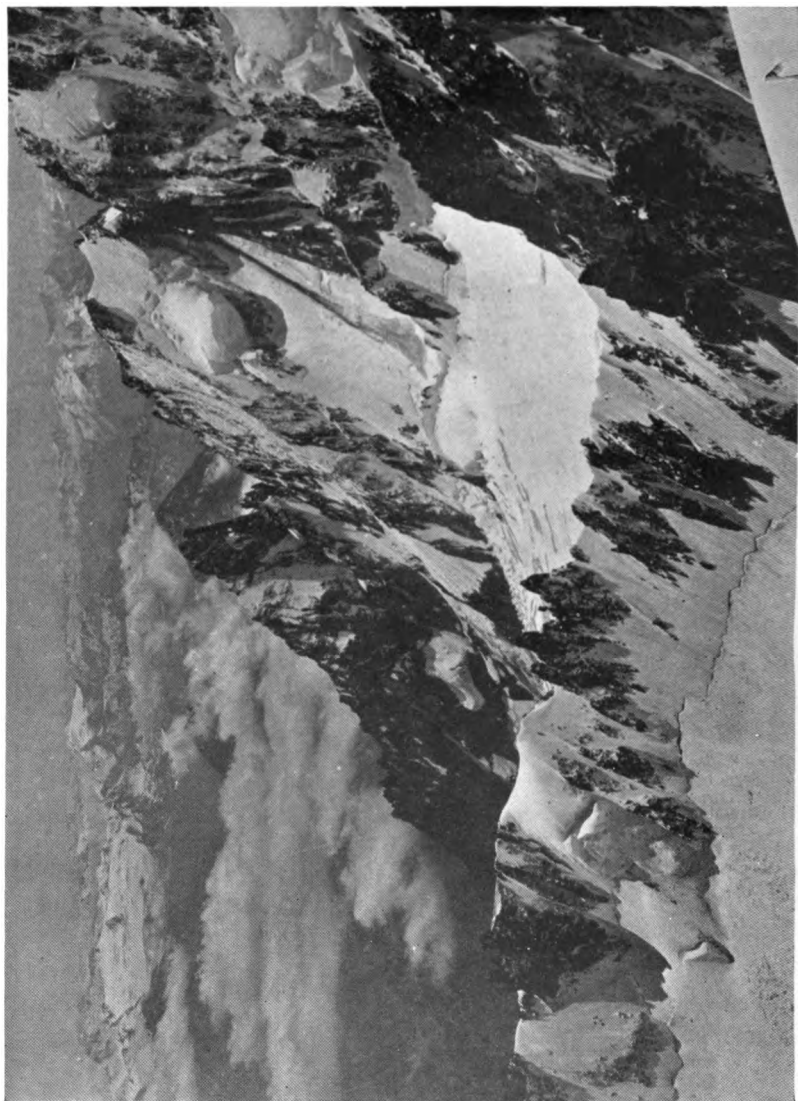
seemed to have exhausted her favours by allowing them to make an entirely successful ascent of the Finsteraarhorn the previous day. A warm, cloudy night had changed the Concordiaplatz into a slough. The slush was far above the boot. Wrapped in clouds, rained on or snowed on, facing the wind, with the water in their boots renewed too frequently to rise a degree above zero, the party trudged up the broad, white, mushy glacier that leads to the pass. Fortunatus was almost certainly alone in suffering more than physical discomfort. That is the worst of getting old ; experience has shown how suddenly the effects of cold and fatigue may develop, and does not let you forget that every bit of ground made towards your pass increases the risk. Useless, silly fears they were, and yet impossible to get rid of. One or two of the party swore they saw a shadow on the snow ; it must have been Fortunatus' fears, for the sun was conspicuously absent.

Without a halt, and roped in threes, for there were several sodden ropes to carry, they reached and crossed the pass, and a few hundred feet below the farther side Fortune joined them again. The wind fell, the clouds ceased to pour out icy rain. First the long, broken glacier unfolded itself before them, then the dark, wet blue of the valley and the hills beyond Goppenstein, and above and beyond these a promise in the sky.

The glacier was easy to traverse and to quit, the crossing of the Jägi torrent was able to add little to the water in their boots, the halt for lunch was late and long. It was found that the heaviest man of the party had fallen without breaking one of the raw eggs he carried, so that the scrambling was done entirely outside the rucksack. Free to be as idle as they liked, with all the labour and the greyness of the day behind them, they watched the promise in the sky fulfil itself as the colours spread over the Lötschenthal.

The walk past the Guggisee and through the woods to Fafleralp was already compensation for the morning ills, and on the descent to Ried those ills became just the sombre edging needed to set off a succession of unforgettable pictures. Never had chalets carried a patina so rich ; never had pure colouring on hill and pasture been so soft and warm ! For once it was good fortune that hid the head and shoulders of the Bietschhorn in a cloud. When the light of the king's countenance is turned upon us we cannot do justice to the beauties of his court.

It was as wonderful to Fortunatus as if he never had seen such things before. And how better can we prove the excellence of Nature's work than by the double test we apply to Art and Literature : ' Does it excite wonder, and does it stand the test



Phot. W. H. Amstutz.

THE PÉTÉRET AND TRIDENT RIDGES.

of Time ? ' And as he wondered Fortune bestowed on him a still greater favour. He saw his young friends were filled with the same delighted wonder as himself. It was the surest testimony to the faith that was in him. For however deep-rooted the convictions of an older generation may be, they are jarred if not shaken by the adverse judgments of the young, as, for example, when our young musicians are bored by Handel and our young artists rave about Epstein. And here was youth obviously accepting the very foundations of his mountain creed. Fortunatus truly named ! and most of all in the company in which he climbed. He knew that in thirty years they would be able to say with him :

Beauty, thy form new fashions may disguise,
Youth may reject what Age would have thee wear,
That evening in the Lötschenthal our eyes
Were met by thine, and held in worship there.

None of them will, of course : they'll know better, bless them !

THE COL DE LA BRENVA ; THE AIGUILLE DE LESCHAUX.

By R. OGIER WARD.

(Read before the Alpine Club, December 12, 1927.)

The Col de la Brenva.

(4933 m. = 14,217 ft., B.I.K.)

I SUPPOSE that most mountaineers have felt at one time or another a great desire to climb the Brenva arête of Mont Blanc. From the Tour Ronde near the Col du Géant one gets a magnificent view of it, and since I first saw it from there I have always taken a special interest in it. In July of this year this interest was greatly increased by watching, from the Aiguille du Géant, those two splendid climbers, Herren Amstutz and von Schumacher, mounting the upper snow slopes and working their way through the final séracs. In a letter to me Amstutz says :—

' We had excellent conditions, left Torino at 1 A.M., reached Col de la Brenva at 7.30, and the top of Mont Blanc 8.30 ; then we went on to Mont Maudit and Mont Blanc du Tacul and arrived at Chamonix at 7 P.M.'

When F. S. Smythe asked me to join with himself and J. H. Bell in an assault upon the Brenva arête I was greatly pleased ; though I rather wondered whether I was quite up to the standard of these two ' jeunes Britanniques ' ; for they had just completed an exceedingly difficult climb of the Aiguille du Plan by a variation of Ryan's route. Moreover, I had certain very grim recollections of a well-known climbing novel which appeared before the War. In this the villain, who is a distinguished mountaineer in disguise, takes charge of an attack upon the Brenva route. After he has pushed along the famous ice arête a wealthy but weakly member of the party, who is so unstable that he has to remain seated all the time, the wicked man attempts to do away with him altogether. But, I reflected, the story clearly shows that this unfortunate traveller's decease would have brought riches to the leader ; now Smythe knew that there was nothing of the sort to be expected in my case, and I felt reasonably sure that, even under similar provocation, he would not sacrifice me merely in order to make a better time for the ascent !

Anyhow, it seemed a very good thing to attempt it, for no English guideless party appears to have climbed this arête since July 1904, when Messrs. C. Wilson, J. H. Wicks and E. H. F. Bradby succeeded.

I may remind you that the first guideless ascent of the Brenva arête was made in 1894 by Messrs. A. F. Mummery, J. N. Collie and G. Hastings ; they had to turn back below the highest séracs and bivouac a second time *beneath* the ice arête, the ascent being completed next day.

So, on July 31, Bell and myself went up to the Rifugio Torino from the Montenvers, arriving shortly before mid-day. Meanwhile Smythe, who had been joined by G. S. Bower and G. G. Macphee, had started from the Requin Hut at 4 A.M., and they made their way towards the Trident de la Brenva. They spent the day in mounting to the col known as the Col du Trident. The difficult part of the ascent to this is up a very steep ice-slope, about 300-400 ft. high, where Smythe had to cut steps for 3 hrs. This was a hard day's work and they only got to the Torino at 6 P.M. Bell and I suggested that they should take a day's rest, but they treated this proposal with the scorn which it deserved, and so we started off at 1.20 A.M. the next morning, August 1. Ahead of us was a very strong French party consisting of MM. Lagarde, de Ségogne, Langlois and some friends, on two ropes ; they had started

before midnight to climb the arête, and possibly to prolong the expedition in another direction.¹

The night was fine and the snow good ; we all wore crampons and found the going over the Col des Flambeaux and onwards from there very pleasant. When we reached the bergschrund below the Col du Trident we had to wait, for the French parties were still on the slope above us and small stones and pieces of ice, which they could not help dislodging, made it too dangerous to start climbing. We spent nearly an hour inside this schrund ; but it was not entirely wasted, for one or two crampon straps had become worn and had to be mended with pieces of leather boot-lace.

Presently, silence above told us that the other parties were over the col, so we left the cold recesses of the schrund and got above it with some difficulty, for the bridge was broken. We mounted the steep ice in the excellent steps which Smythe had made the day before. The order was—Smythe, Macphee, Bower, on the first rope, myself and Bell on the second.

Macphee is very strong and his ice-axe was not ; he hit the mountain with it and the head broke off. This was unfortunate, for here we were in the dark and on an ice slope, the steepness of which is at least 50°. It was clear that Macphee could not go on, and after some discussion Bell, with a really charming unselfishness, undertook to go back with him. As we stood in our steps, certain rearrangements had to be carried out. We had started with one rucksack short in order that our leader might be free, but now we had to carry one each. Bell's rucksack had to be hauled up and certain of its contents transferred to mine, while Macphee, after removing some essentials from his sack, passed it up to the leader Smythe. All this was rather difficult, and would have been still more so but for the splendid light given by the ' Ever-ready ' batteries and lamps which we had bought at Mr. Unna's suggestion. But even these could not fully illuminate the depths of Macphee's enormous sack, and it was only in the evening at Chamonix that Smythe discovered that, in addition to his own things, he had carried throughout the day a bath towel, a pound of chocolate, and all Macphee's money ! This touching example of mutual trust amongst mountaineers cannot be left unrecorded ; also, I, personally, prefer to climb with a man who is not

¹ The French parties were composed as follows : first rope, MM. Lagarde, Langlois and de Ségogne ; second rope, MM. Noetzlin and Brincard, with Armand Charlet and Raymond Tournier.—*Editor.*

particular as to a few odds and ends that Chance may put into his sack !

Macphee unroped and skilfully passed below Bower, and then tied on to the end of my rope temporarily, and went neatly down to Bell. I had thought it necessary to make some trifling improvements in my steps while this was going on, and in so doing I started a torrent. Torrents usually flow downwards ; this one flowed upwards, and was composed entirely of invective ; it emanated from Bell. He assured me that pieces of ice only to be described as séracs were falling upon his head. He expressed, with some warmth, the hope that I should soon have made myself entirely comfortable—indeed, surely by now I must have room not only for myself but also for a bath chair !

Before long I had roped in between Smythe and Bower and we said good-bye sadly to the other two. We felt that Fortune was treating us unkindly, for this delay and our wait in the schrund had made us at least an hour and a half late ; and now we had lost two good comrades. But Fortune was more gentle than we knew, as we were yet to learn.

Still in the dark we climbed the ice slope, which was steep enough for us to be glad of an occasional hand-hold on the slabby rocks close by ; and presently we worked up over a rock rib, until at 5 A.M. we stood upon the Col du Trident. A most beautiful dawn was at hand, and we paused for a minute to admire the wonderful view of the upper slopes of the Brenva Glacier and the cliffs enclosing it. We discussed again the best way up the arête. Should we follow Moore's route and start at the bottom of the arête, or should we follow that adopted by most recent parties, and, after crossing the glacier high up, mount the very steep snow slopes of its N. flank, to reach its crest just where the ice arête begins ? This latter is the route that was made by Mr. R. W. Lloyd with Josef Pollinger and A. Rey, though I believe he does not recommend it, for he considers it dangerous. The first rope of the French parties was gradually nearing this point on the arête, and could be seen high up, looking like flies on a wall, tiny black spots, giving one a good idea of the immensity of the mountain architecture which makes these Italian precipices of Mont Blanc so magnificent.

We knew that there were dangers in this latter line of ascent—dangers which had been emphasised very strongly by Captain Farrar in a recent note in our JOURNAL. In his opinion this route is not justifiable. Both Moore in 1865 and Güssfeldt in 1892 saw avalanches fall in this area.

Certainly anyone who chooses it *must* realise that this part of the névé must be crossed early. It is essential to be well up the snow near to the crest of the Brenva arête before the sun gets on to the vast ice cliffs which form so much of the rampart of the E. side of Mont Blanc. And we were late. We wondered what to do. The first thing was to push on, so we hurried down the snow slopes from the col towards the glacier, jumped a little schrund, and began to cross the huge snow basin below Mont Maudit, making rapid progress towards the arête.

Day was at hand, and the edge of dawn was creeping down the mountain ; for some minutes the sun had been shining brightly on the huge masses of ice below the Mur de la Côte. Suddenly we halted, for above us a tremendous roar was heard ; it increased like thunder, and then echoed from the cliffs—an immense avalanche of ice crashed down from the séracs below the Col de la Brenva. It rushed over the rocks and down the huge snow couloir, and above it rose into the air a dense, white mist of powdered snow and ice. It raced across the névé, poured over the crevasses, and sweeping onwards it entirely obliterated, for an extent of fully 300 yds., the tracks lying ahead of us. The incident of Macphee's broken axe and the time lost thereby was now understood as one of Fortune's kindlier acts.

When it was over we threw off to the left into safety and began Moore's route up the arête. We had a short rest on the little 'col' near the foot of this ridge, which it has been suggested should be called 'Col Moore,' in commemoration of the first ascent of this ridge which started at this point. This first party consisted of Messrs. A. W. Moore, J. Walker, H. Walker and G. Mathews, with Melchior and Jakob Anderegg, and the date was July 15, 1865. They of course bivouacked lower down the Brenva Glacier, as all parties used to do, until the new plan was adopted of starting from the Torino Hut.

We started again with Bower leading, climbing over rocks that needed care, and up short snow slopes and couloirs, making progress towards the ice arête. Then Smythe took over again and we advanced along its crest. This year there was enough snow on it to give good security for crampons ; but it must always be somewhat sensational, not only because of its length, but also because for some yards it is cut away beneath, and one walks on an overhanging ridge of ice. Moore's party found the ice arête exceedingly sharp, so sharp that it was necessary to cross a good deal of it *à cheval*. When one reflects that in those days the ice-axe as we know it was not part of an amateur climber's equipment, instead of it the clumsy alpenstock had

to be used, and that of course crampons were unknown, then I at any rate am filled with a tremendous admiration for the splendid steadiness and courage of those early mountaineers.

Beyond this the ridge loses itself in a steep face of snow. I took over the lead here and found the going rather bad, for the sun had had time to soften the surface. The séracs standing above look rather fearful but never seem to fall, and we toiled up this, the only dull part of the climb. On the upper part of this long slope Smythe relieved me of the very hard work.

When Smythe was invalided out of the Royal Air Force early in the year, after typhoid fever—and here I wish, as a doctor, to remark that more than once I have been pained to see medical advice not treated with the respect which it deserves—the medical board told him ‘not to go upstairs too fast.’ But perhaps I am complaining without reason, for now I come to think of it, I never have seen Smythe go upstairs. But certainly on this slope it was necessary to speak to him very severely more than once, though it must be confessed that I was thinking more of my own health than of his, for the hard work, the altitude, and a large sack did not seem to affect him in the least; indeed, as he worked his way up the slope consisting of ice covered by slushy snow, cutting steps every now and then, he cheered us by telling us a long story. But we were even more amazed when, a few minutes later, a fruity baritone clove the thin air. Smythe had burst into song. I can assure you that I listened spell-bound as, trilling blithely like a lark, he mounted steadily towards the blue sky—until Bower gave a sharp jerk to the rope, and thus reminded me that I had to follow them.

We had our last rest where the top of this snow joins some rocks. I was again allotted the honoured post of leader, and we now began to make our way through the highest séracs. The work was very interesting, for though the steps of the previous party were before us, yet now that the snow was melting, cutting had to be done in several places where they had been safe on crampons alone. The route winds in and out amongst huge cliffs of ice and along irregular terraces and ledges often steep enough for hand-holds to be necessary, whilst the axe is used in one hand only. It ends with a steep step about 15 ft. high, which has been spoken of as an ice-chimney. It is not far short of vertical, and here many of the steps could be only toe-holds. In certain years it might well be impassable.



Phot. W. H. Amstutz.

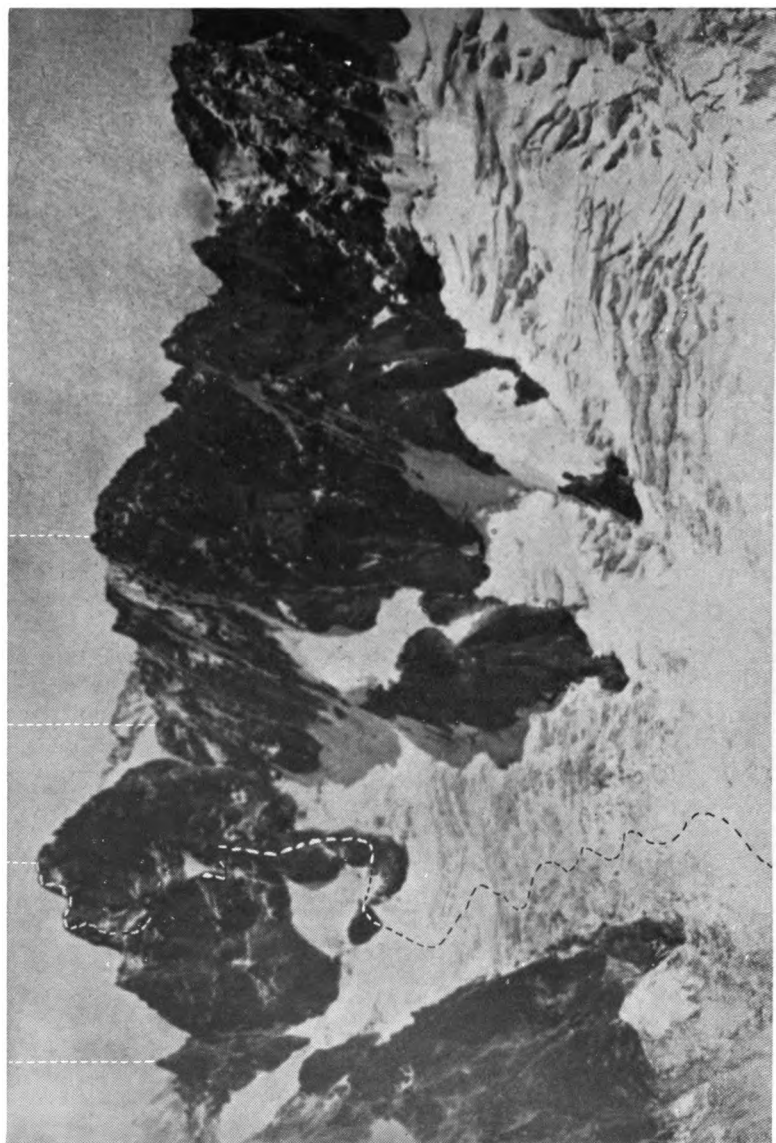
THE PÉTERET ARÊTE, WITH BRENVA RIDGE IN FOREGROUND,
from Mont Maudit.

AIGUILLON

A. DE LESCHAUX

COL DES PETITES
JORASSES

PETITES
JORASSES



Phot. W. F. Donkin.

N.W. FACE OF AIGUILLE DE LESCHAUX.

We judged it impossible to pass direct to the Col de la Brenva, because a huge and broken ice-wall intervenes. It is, however, to be remembered that Claude Wilson's party did successfully make this traverse direct to the col, and this must indeed have been a most brilliant piece of ice-work. When, therefore, the séracs were passed, we went along a narrow shelf of névé overhung by a huge ice-cliff on the left hand, and then mounted up easy snow which leads on to the N. ridge of Mont Blanc, near the Petits Rochers Rouges. This shelf was found this year to be just as described in Moore's record of the climb in his book, 'The Alps in 1864.' It was now very cold and rather late, namely 2 p.m., and this decided us to adhere to our original plan of traversing the Col de la Brenva to Chamonix. We descended quickly along the Mur de la Côte to the col, and began to go down by the Corridor route, where we presently found ourselves in tracks ; these proved to be those of the Frenchmen who had taken this route down from the summit of Mont Blanc. After some time we saw them reascending, for they had found the séracs unsafe, and they gave us a helpful shout to pass above the little patch of rock lying below the Rochers Rouges. From this point onwards the descent to the Grands Mulets is, of course, easy, though it takes a long time.

After tea we started from the Grands Mulets at 6 p.m., and descended across the Bossons Glacier to the Pierre à l'Echelle. Everyone of whom we asked the way assured us that we could not possibly reach Chamonix that night. But Smythe led downwards with the same judgment that he had shown during the day, and in the dark kept to the path, even when it seemed to me like parts of the untrodden Congo. We reached Chamonix at 10 p.m. ; the climb had taken us about 21 hrs., the conditions had been perfect, and since leaving the Torino we had been up and down more than 17,000 ft. We agreed that the Brenva is a magnificent climb.

The N.W. Face of the Aiguille de Leschaux.

(3770 m. = 12,365 ft., B.I.K.)

The Aiguille de Leschaux is a mountain full of charms, and one of these is its shyness, for it hides itself modestly in a secluded corner of the Mont Blanc Range. There are no easy passes in its neighbourhood, nor any summits very commonly visited. If it stood where the Grépon stands, it would be quite as popular, for it is built of the same magnificent rock, and its

N.W. face is as steep as the Nantillons face of the Grépon itself ; so also is that part of it which stands above the Glacier de Triolet. I may mention that the B.I.K. map does not depict this clearly.

Though so modest, the Aiguille de Leschaux does not entirely hide its beautiful form from anyone who mounts the Mer de Glace towards the séracs of the Géant Glacier, but for full appreciation it must be more nearly approached.

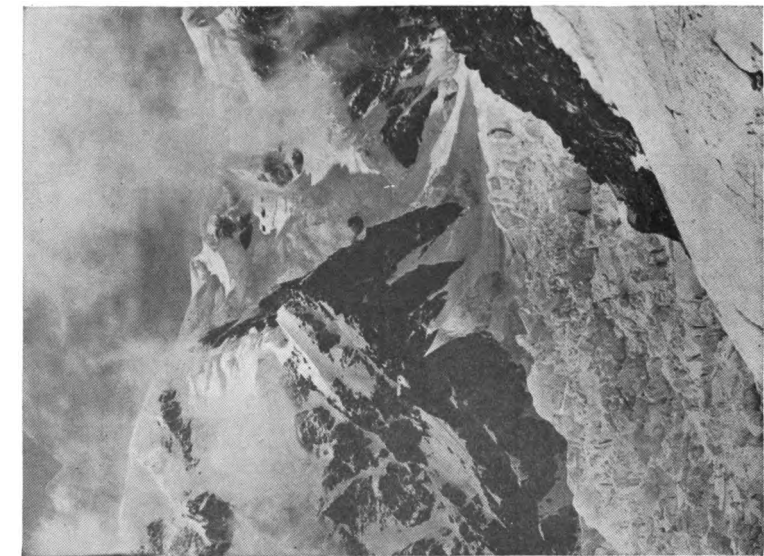
Anyone who follows the well-known and oft-trodden track that leads from—Shepherd's Bush to Ealing, will find near Acton a vast building of an immense girth and many cubits high, its walls pierced with a thousand windows. In this are stored all the records of the Ministry of Pensions, very accurate in detail, enormous in quantity. Some day it may be necessary for the Alpine Club to construct such a building in Savile Row, to house the records of the manner in which each mountain came by its wounds. But for the present, and for a long time to come, this is totally unnecessary—all one has to do is to ask Captain Farrar.

So when, in 1926, he told me that the French face of the Aiguille de Leschaux had not been climbed, I felt that it was time to ' get one's nose up against the rocks ' and see if it might not be managed.

Some reconnaissances in this year showed me that an arête, which is marked on the map as descending from near Point 9571 m. to the Glacier de Leschaux, offered a possible line along which to make the assault. Where this fades away in the face of the mountain, the climb would surely become difficult, and the last of the two huge steps that lead to the summit might well prove impossible. But I felt that the small patch of snow to the right of this gave hopes of a possible traverse to avoid this obstacle.

I was fortunate in getting the Arolla guide, Joseph Georges, *Le Skieur*, for this attack, and we started on August 3 for the Couvercle Refuge. There we spent the evening basking in the sun, wondering whether this ancient hostel was built after the large rocky slab of the Aiguille du Moine had descended, or whether, as seems more probable, the architect was about to add a top story—when the lid fell, and so prevented for ever the development of this wholly inadequate resting place !

The guardian of the hut, the old Corporal, did his best, by a strict and disciplinary disposal of our bodies, to give us a comfortable night, and the next morning we started at 2.40 A.M.



Phot. (?) G. Hastings.

The BRENVIA RIDGE from the old bivouac.



Phot. R. O. Ward.

The PETITES JORASSES
looking down the "Hidden Valley."

across the Glacier de Talèfre, passing above its séracs to the Pierre à Béranger and from there descending to the Glacier de Leschaux. Here we met Monsieur Morin and a friend, who were working up the glacier towards the Col des Hirondelles. Bidding them au revoir, we moved away to the left and at 5 A.M. put on the rope ; we then began to mount into that basin of the Leschaux Glacier which is surrounded by the Aiguille de l'Éboulement, the Aiguille de Leschaux and the Petites Jorasses. At first we advanced in the direction of the latter mountain but soon found several large crevasses which were impassable. We had therefore to move over towards the rocky spur descending from the Aiguille de l'Éboulement, and even here could only get through the ice-fall with difficulty—indeed at one time it looked as if we should be stopped altogether. When above this we traversed to the right, and were near the foot of the arête which I have mentioned at 6.30 A.M. Joseph then did some step-cutting across hard snow, and we reached the rocks 20 min. later—where we had a rest and some food.

After breakfast we began to climb the arête, keeping for the most part on its right side and a little bit below its crest. This was rather difficult, so that we often moved only one at a time. Presently, over a point where this small arête is lost on the mountain, we climbed round a gendarme and then descended some 30 ft. to reach and to pass below the triangular patch of snow which is seen from the Leschaux Glacier to lie in the centre of the mountain. An unusually wide and deep couloir comes down to the left-hand edge of this snow from near the N. crest of the mountain. It lies behind and is shut in by that main arête which is shown on the map. It is indeed much more than a couloir—it is a veritable valley, and what is more a hidden valley, into which it is quite impossible to see except from the Petites or Grandes Jorasses.

I had always taken a special interest in hidden valleys—that is, ever since my parents recounted to me the activities of that enterprising explorer, 'Sinbad the Sailor.' And here we were in just such a place, and it was delicious to think that no one had been there before us. I confess I was a little concerned as to how we should get out at the top of it, for of course I realised that there was only the slightest chance that any passing merchants would throw joints of meat into our valley ; unfortunately we had none in our sacks, and it seemed most improbable that a few packets of Maggi soup would attract any eagles. It was also most depressing to remember how very rarely nowadays the Alpine skies are darkened by that monstrous but

kindly bird, the Roc ; and I was not at all sure that Joseph possessed the same facility for lifting travellers !

Stones do not appear to fall down this couloir ; but anyhow we were safe from them, for most of the time we climbed high up along the side of the arête. At 10 A.M. we had finished this part of the climb, for the arête dies away gradually in the face of the mountain.

After a short rest we began to climb up straight towards that final step which lies N. of the summit. This part of the ascent was the hardest climbing that we met with, for though the rocks are of perfect quality, they are very steep, and have the same formation as those of the Aiguille du Géant. That is to say, there are large slabs with intervening cracks and ledges, and though the smallest holes suffice for stability and even for upward progress, yet belays of any sort were scarce and consequently very special care was necessary. For long periods it was only possible to move one at a time, and Joseph frequently went out to the full limit of the rope before allowing me to follow him.

About half an hour below the final step, while we were climbing high up on the N.W. face, we came to a particularly difficult part, and here Joseph found a piton and recent scratches on the rocks for a few feet below it, whilst, above this point, there were more tracks leading upwards to the summit. I have subsequently learned that in July of this year an Italian party ascended the mountain by the N. arête, and, although details are not available, it seems clear that this was accomplished *via* the Col de Leschaux, attained from the Italian side.²

Whilst Joseph was studying the piton, I was about 20 ft. below him, my left foot on a narrow but secure ledge, and there were a few holds for one hand. I got very tired of this position, for Joseph's investigation of the piton lasted for a long time. He did not like the look of it. Naturally, he was disappointed at its presence, but he was still more disappointed by its insecurity. He would not trust it as a foothold, nor even as a handhold, and without it the step was exceedingly difficult.

I watched him make several attempts to get up without using it, but this was too dangerous. Then he tried to plant his ice-axe with the point jammed into a crack so that the head

² July 31, 1927. The party was composed of Signori F. Ravelli, A. Gaia and G. Rivetti, with Adolphe Rey and A. Chenoz. *R.M.* 1928, pp. 12-15.—*Editor.*

would make a foothold, but he could not get it securely fixed. And so presently I was told to climb up to him and share for a few moments the narrow ledge on which he stood. As there was not room for two people here, I was quite glad when he succeeded in climbing above me whilst I firmly held the axe for him to stand on. Then I had a considerable wait, during which he went out to the full limit of our twenty metres rope. It was now my turn to follow, and this I did with a good deal of grunting, for he had left me his sack, which contained his boots (he was climbing in *kletterschuhen*), and also his ice-axe. With a good deal of difficulty, my position not being very secure, I managed with the one hand that could be spared to get his rucksack over the top of my own, which itself was bulky, for amongst other things it contained the spare rope, and my axe was attached to it also, and then, to sling his axe round one wrist. Joseph gave a good heave which got me up the first few feet, but after that he seemed to lose interest. No doubt he was thinking, and very properly so, that I ought to be allowed to enjoy to the full the honourable post of porter to a distinguished guide ! Above this, careful climbing from ledge to ledge continued to be necessary, and thus we presently reached the northernmost end of the shoulder for which we were aiming. On this rocky angle, which is perhaps 150 ft. below the real summit, we found a cairn built by our predecessors. The isthmus connecting this with the final *arête* is as narrow, and, indeed, as cruelly sharp, as that flake of rock which leads to the *Passage du C.P.* on the Grépon ; on its N.E. side the rocks are cut away beneath it and its knife-edge crest overhangs the Triolet Glacier.

From this point one gets a magnificent view of the cliffs dropping from the summit of the mountain down to this glacier. I do not think that anywhere, even on the Grépon, have I seen a steeper wall of rock. Scrambling astride the knife-edge we reached the final and very steep cliff below the summit. As I had expected, it was not possible to climb this directly. But the idea of turning it by means of the little patch of snow on the N.W. face proved to be practicable. This part of the ascent, although by no means easy, was not so difficult as much of the slab-climbing which we had had lower down. We mounted by the snow, and then by the rocks which lie between the edge of the cliff on the left and an open couloir on the right. At 1.30 P.M. we reached the summit.

A discussion as to the best way home revealed the fact that neither of us had passports with us, and without them we felt

unwilling to enter a foreign country. I had hoped that there might be a practicable way from the ridge between the Aiguille de Leschaux and the Monte Gruetta, down the Glacier de Triolet, and so over the Col de l'Éboulement towards the Mer de Glace. But the cliffs are, as I have said, of extraordinary steepness. We decided therefore to make for the Col des Hirondelles.

The descent began at 2 P.M., and we followed the tracks of other parties down the ordinary snow route towards the Glacier de Frébouzie. Presently we left these, and keeping close under the rocks on the S. face of the Petites Jorasses we passed an interesting hour in threading our way through the séracs. At 3.20 P.M. we began to mount steep snow slopes towards the Col des Hirondelles. Although there were tracks in which we followed, this was hard work, for the snow was now soft. Also, we had had only very few and very short rests throughout the day. But at 5.15 P.M. we were on the top of the pass.

As we discussed the col during the 20 min. rest which we had on its summit, it became apparent that both of us had for many years wished to cross it, and we were delighted at the prospect of now doing so. Curiously enough, by the time we reached the bottom of it our views had changed, but they were in no way divergent, for we both agreed that never again would we descend it ; and that if ever we were going to climb up it, we would only do so if we were allowed to be the leading rope. The rocks are not difficult, but are of the most abominable quality, hardly any of them are sound, and, as they are decidedly steep, it is necessary to climb with great care. We began to climb down by keeping to the rib of rocks on our right. Presently we traversed to the left on to the rib nearest the Grandes Jorasses, and later back again on to the right-hand rib, which descends to a lower level.

So long as we were on the crests of the rocky ribs we felt fairly safe, but on their sides and when crossing the narrow couloir between them there was real danger from falling stones. There were not many of these, though I remember one which, though I did not see it, sounded as it passed exactly like a *fid* of 5.9 high-explosive shell. But when we got on to the névé we saw the immense masses of rocky débris which we ourselves had hurled down during the descent, and I really felt rather ashamed of this, for we seemed to have done a good deal of damage which could not easily be put right, and I feared that the French Government might take action against us for mutilation of the landscape. On leaving the rocks and reaching the

snow, we traversed slightly to our left across a deep trough worn in the snow, and then worked down towards the bergschrund. I felt certain that we should not be able to cross it at this place, and begged Joseph to allow me to traverse more to the right again. However, to do so would involve more risk of stones, and he urged me to descend farther in order to make a closer inspection. I did so unwillingly, and soon reached the upper lip of the bergschrund. The prospect was not encouraging. Indeed, the appearance of the immediate foreground seemed to me just like that of Aldwych seen from the top of Bush House. Realising that it was impossible to convey this idea to Joseph, I pressed him to come and look for himself. He descended promptly and agreed that no solution of the problem could be evolved *per saltum*, so, cutting rapidly across to the right, he made for a somewhat battered flake of snow which had split off from the edge of the schrund. Down this I then worked cautiously and was so able to get underneath the overhanging upper lip of the crevasse. It was much narrower here, and an easy jump landed us on the lower edge and the névé beneath it. It was now 8 p.m., for the descent had taken us 2 hr. 25 min.

We moved off at once, bearing to the right close beneath the massif of the Petites Jorasses, and we were soon surprised to hear a cheering shout from Monsieur Morin, who had decided to bivouac near by in order to be able to make some reconnaissances in the early morning of the following day.³ He and his companion seemed very comfortable on a rocky ledge and, wishing them good luck, we hurried down the glacier. In fading light we passed the Aiguille du Tacul and, about dark, reached an evil locality where, in the wildest disorder of séracs and boulders, all the crevasses and moraines in the Alps undoubtedly unite with one another. But Joseph was not to be checked and made a faultless passage to reach the easy route along the Mer de Glace.

At 11.10 p.m. we reached the Montanvers—and a certain bottle that opened with a pop.

³ We understand that a new G.H.M. 'shelter-hut' is to be erected about this spot.—*Editor*.

THE FIRST ASCENT OF MONT BLANC DIRECT FROM THE
BRENVA GLACIER AND OTHER CLIMBS IN 1927.

BY F. S. SMYTHE.

(Read before the Alpine Club, February 7, 1927.)

The Second Ascent of the Aiguille du Plan by the E. face.

SO much has been written and said anent the weather of 1927 that it is beyond my powers to invent any new expression or improve on any old one. The only ingenious explanation that I have ever heard was that of a Swiss hotel-keeper during a heavy thaw at a popular winter sports resort. He said that Englishmen were responsible for the Föhn wind, and, when I asked him why, replied: 'Because zey opens all ze windows and so, alas, let ze 'ot air outside.'

When, on July 21, J. H. B. Bell and I arrived at the Montenvers the weather on Mont Blanc seemed almost to reflect the conditions on the Italian frontier. Two days later, however, it cleared and we spent a happy day in the sun prospecting a route up the icefall of the Glacier d'envers de Blaitière. We found an easy way up the rocks of the N. side, but at one point were forced on to the glacier and wriggled through a gritty hole in the ice.

We left at 1.40 A.M. the following morning, armed with the admirable electrical lighting contrivances advocated by Mr. Unna, and, constraining once more through the gritty hole, were soon above the icefall.

The Glacier d'envers de Blaitière is a shy little glacier set in a *cirque* of truculent rock peaks. Greatest of these peaks is the Aiguille du Plan, supported on this side by a narrow scimitar-shaped buttress. It was by this buttress that Capt. V. J. E. Ryan with Joseph and Franz Lochmatter made the first ascent of the E. face in 1906. Like others of Capt. Ryan's amazing climbs no details have been published, save for a short note by Franz, in which he said that he considered it the finest climb among the Aiguilles.

Three schrunds defend the foot of the buttress. The lower two were easy; the top one awkward. We crossed well to the right, and traversed to the left to the foot of the buttress.

Ryan's party gained the buttress low down, but now the sunless rocks were heavily iced. We decided therefore to



Phot. Sydney Spencer.

AIGUILLE DU PLAN (showing E. face)
from Aiguille de Blaitière.

ascend the couloir between the Plan and the Dent du Crocodile and break out on to the buttress at the earliest opportunity.

The couloir was in very bad condition and consisted of steep slabs covered in floury snow. There were no good stances; feet had to kick and scrape for the joints in the slabs, and every hold be cleared of its load of snow. A malevolent little waterfall gambolled down the middle, in the teeth of which a most difficult crack had to be negotiated. We were much longer than we had anticipated and the danger from avalanches became apparent. We escaped from the danger zone not a moment too soon, for a nasty slab of hardened snow detached itself and slid down over Bell's head as he crouched behind a rock. The slabs petered out into ice, not ice formed from snow, but ice formed from water melting above, almost black and terribly hard. Mummery's party met with much the same thing on the N. face.

We halted in an uncomfortable niche under a prominent rock face falling from the buttress and there consumed a thoughtful meal. The suggestive noises in the couloir beneath had no terrors for us now, but it was still impossible to gain the crest of the buttress.

Continuing on our way we were cheered by a patch of snow, perhaps 100 ft. long, but it gave place all too soon to the pitiless ice. Higher up the slope became a veritable wall. Handholds were necessary and cutting became a constricted and tiring business. If the work was hard for the leader, the second man's lot was the most unpleasant. As well as we could we linked the occasional rocks projecting through the ice, but these usually sloped the wrong way, and offered little service, either as belays or temporary resting places. This involved long 'run outs' of rope and the second man's lot was not a happy one as he was bombarded with ice chips which, on such a steep slope, acquire a considerable velocity. But Bell endured five hours of it without complaint, while his numbed hands were bruised and cut by the cannonade.

At 3 P.M. we emerged into the sunshine on the crest of the buttress. Ahead, sunny slabs beckoned us up in a great curving crest. Optimism bloomed. 'In three hours we shall be on the summit.' Never was man more utterly deceived. The point at which we struck the buttress crest is perhaps 1200 ft. below the summit, and this 1200 ft. occupied 12 hrs. of climbing time. Conditions were bad. We were often opposed by unstable snow edges which gave us much work in flogging them away, but the *general* standard of difficulty

is the highest that I have met with. In this I may be influenced by the gruelling preliminary work in the couloir. Many hours of cutting in ice are a poor preparation for fancy rock climbing.

The climbing consisted of clean-cut cracks set in magnificently firm granite slabs. Seldom were these cracks less than 50 ft. in length, and often the whole of our 100 ft. rope was requisitioned while axes and rucksacks formed a third and very inefficient climbing member of the party. In one crack Bell lost his axe beyond recovery, and in another a loose stone fell and jammed my leg. But for Bell's prompt action in climbing up and working it free a serious accident might have resulted. As it was, I escaped with nothing worse than a skinned knee. After this the lead finally changed hands and, with the exception of one or two short stretches, remained with Bell for the remainder of the climb.

At about 7 P.M. we bivouacked on the only ledge we had seen capable of accommodating us. We were glad to have brought a *Zdarsky* tent-sack, for we were very tired and suffered from cramp. 'We felt perfectly contented and even luxurious,' wrote Bell in a description of the climb, 'as we lay back and admired the glorious crimson of the sunset on the Grandes Jorasses.' The night was perfect with scarcely a breath of wind and finally we slept.

At 5 A.M. the sun rose in a cloudless sky, but we waited until 7 before starting as there had been a hard frost overnight.

To fresh men the work was easier, but an awkward snow bulge and unstable snow edges took a long time. At length we found ourselves beneath a 100 ft. step in the buttress where further advance seemed hopeless. The solution lay in a traverse low down to the left, and for this Bell removed his boots. I have never seen a more exposed or delicate traverse and I realized as I studied Bell's progress that I was watching the finest piece of rock climbing that I had ever seen. As I clawed and dangled and swung round myself I began to suspect Bell of becoming a sort of climbing 'Faust' and of making certain arrangements with 'Mephistopheles.'

Chimney after chimney, and crack after crack followed, until we realised with joy that we were just beneath the final buttress sweeping up to the summit rocks. But seemingly the only way up was an ugly narrow vertical crack which appeared to ease off in a slope some 15 ft. higher. Once again Bell took off his boots and I gave him a shoulder. But this time he could make nothing of it.

There seemed no other way. The situation was distinctly ugly. It was long after midday, and we were actually discussing the chances of another night aloft or the more than disagreeable alternative offered by retreat or a series of *rappels* down into the couloir to the S. The peak *had* to go. We descended and traversed to the right. I was first and shouted to Bell. 'There's a chimney ahead; looks not too good; full of ice; but it *might* go.' Ignoring this gem of logic Bell joined me and started up the chimney. Ice filled the interior, but he was able to utilize a crack in the right wall. Fifty feet up further progress appeared impossible. The chimney thinned out into a wicked overhang that leered down upon us. But now came one of those dramatic surprises the mountains reserve for the mountaineer. Right across the hopeless wall to the left and unseen from below ran a narrow ledge. Half wondering what further frightfulness the mountain might have in store for us, we passed along it. The ledge broadened. We walked. There was snow ahead and on it three people, two guides and a *voyageur*, were descending by the ordinary way. We threw off the rope, raced past them, and a minute or two later stood on the summit of our peak.

The 'Knubel' Chimney on the Grépon.

The 'Knubel' chimney on the Grépon was first led by Josef Knubel during the first ascent of the Grépon by Mr. G. W. Young's party from the Mer de Glace. Coming at the end of many hours of exacting rock climbing it may fairly be described as an amazing *tour de force*.

Messrs. Bower, A. S. Pigott, E. H. Pryor and Morley Wood, who made one of the earlier ascents of the Grépon from the Mer de Glace, attempted this chimney, but failed. Bower was naturally anxious to try once more, so accordingly one pleasant sunny day he and I wandered gently up from the Col des Nantillons to the foot of the chimney which is one of the most forbidding places that I have ever set eyes upon.

To the subsequent proceedings my only contribution consisted in offering myself as a foothold while Bower climbed the rocks above a stone wedged half-way up the chimney. The limit of the possible is reached by these rocks and our tactics were similar to those employed on overcoming the 'Flake Crack' on Scawfell. The leader threads the rope behind the wedged stone, brings the second man up and ties him on. The leader threads his own rope through the loops,

and utilizing the second man as a foothold, completes the ascent.

I must confess that, when my turn came, I was thankful not only for sustained hauling, but to have an additional rope let down as handhold. I was thus dragged like a lobster from beneath a rock feebly gasping into the summit sunshine where I congratulated Bower on his wonderful feat. The objection to the Grépon is the thoroughly unjustifiable traverse beneath the séracs of the Nantillons glacier. It is the most perilous 'standard' route that I have seen, and we were in great danger during our descent.

The Aiguille Blanche de Pététet.

At 9 A.M. on August 10, G. Graham Macphee and I swung on weighty sacks and stepped out along the dusty road from Courmayeur to the Val Veni.

We were bound for the traverse of Mont Blanc by the Pététet ridge from the Brèche des Dames Anglaises. This great traverse, without question the longest in the Alps, was accomplished in its entirety by Herren Obersteiner and Schneider on July 31 and August 1; repeated by Herr von Kehl with two guides and a porter on August 4 and 5 of this year. Both parties bivouacked on the ridge; the first party below the Aiguille Blanche, and the second party on the Col de Pététet.

Conditions promised well. The weather of late had been bad, but many days of waiting and disappointment seemed on the eve of being rewarded. The ugliness of grey skies and sullen cloud roofs was gone, and only a silver lock of cloud trailed from the summit of Mont Blanc.

As we trudged along the military road in the Val Veni, I looked upon the huge ramparts whose intricacies we hoped to unravel; the black precipices of the Aiguille Noire; the mass of the Aiguille Blanche so elusively foreshortened. How vast they look, and yet that vastness is but a tithe of their real majesty.

Before entering upon the wilderness of boulders below the slopes leading up to the Gamba hut we rested and feasted on luscious bilberries. Placed between slabs of bread and butter they form a delicious dish undreamt of in the philosophy of Mrs. Beeton.

The Gamba hut is situated on a little oasis of greenery enclosed by the jaws of the Brouillard and Pététet ridges.

Glaciers riven and torn crawl down on either hand. Uneasy sounds of mountain strife; the forces of gravity and decay come ceaselessly to the ear: the harsh roar of stones and the growl of stricken séracs echo threateningly around the *cirque* of splendid peaks. To the S. the fair pastures of the Val Veni are at our feet, and beyond gentle hills stretch to the snowy mountains of Cogne.

Long hard work was in front and we stretched ourselves on the bunks for two hours of rest.

Other parties had meanwhile arrived; Messrs. Eustace Thomas and A. Zürcher with Josef Knubel and Josef Lerjen; Dr. Hugo Müller with some friends and an Italian party.

At 5.15 p.m. we left, with the good lucks and 'Gute Reises' of our friends in our ears.

At 6.15 p.m. we stood on the Col de l'Innominata. I know of no scene more damning to hope and optimism than the Pétéret ridge seen from here. The day was nearly spent, and the great wall opposite looked terribly forbidding in the half-light. The livid huddle of séracs beneath seemed like some ghostly gathering, the sliced precipices of the Aiguille Noire, a dungeon wall. Our avenue of advance was the slender ribbon of snow couloir to the Brèche des Dames Anglaises first followed by Messrs. G. Winthrop Young and H. O. Jones in 1912.

A loose and unpleasant descent from the Col de l'Innominata brought us to the Fresnay Glacier. The glacier is broken and torn. The best way across lay above the icefall, but how to get there? There was nothing for it but to skulk in the wilderness of fallen ice blocks beneath the séracs. And we must hurry; already the first star shone tranquilly far removed from our absurd problems.

Momentary indecision gave place to fierce energy as we struggled and scrambled between the fallen blocks lying piled like the discarded bricks of the Ice King's children. Now over a half-choked crevasse, now leaping a cleft, now balancing on a slender edge, or crawling like rats through narrow corridors of polished ice. But at length the labyrinth was behind; we stamped our crampons into more sedate ground beneath the couloir. The bergschrund is a formidable one, but we turned it by a snow bridge on the left and traversed back above into the couloir.

A full moon seizing the torch of day shone obligingly straight into the couloir and we mounted rapidly over steep hard snow.

It had long seemed evident that we were carrying far too much, and we were glad to sit down on some rocks and transfer some of the edible portion of it to a more convenient receptacle, which had for some time been advertising its grievances in no uncertain manner. Even so, our sacks still remained very heavy and I suggested to Macphee that we should jettison something. To give weight to this idea I seized a large lump of cheese and hurled it down the slope to the bergschrund. It was the only occasion on the expedition when Macphee displayed emotion.

About two-thirds of the way up the couloir forks into a Y, the arms of which contain the rock pinnacle of L'Isolée. We mounted by the left branch, which is narrow and deeply cut.¹ No moonlight reached us, but reflection served to light the way.

The angle steepened; the snow thinned, ice supervened. The silence was broken by the thud of the axe. Little fragments hissed away into the void; the Goblins, if there were any, came forth to inquire into this disturbance of their nocturnal revels. Two hundred feet below the Brèche we took to the rocks on the left, but they were evil and untrustworthy and gave us a foretaste of the many hours' climbing to follow.

Keeping always on the W. face of the Aiguille Blanche we climbed until 2 A.M. when, the moonlight failing, we bivouacked in a peculiarly draughty place until 5 A.M.

Grey cheerless light stirred us to action. Numbed and fumbling we made hot tea and duly blessed its calories of life-giving heat before commencing to clamber, a trifle stiffly, up the rocks to the crest of the S.E. ridge.

We struck the ridge too high and had to descend some way before we could traverse across the base of the Grand Gendarme.² This pinnacle rivals the Grépon in size and yet it is but an incident in the S.E. ridge of the Aiguille Blanche. The scale of this mountain is amazing. Hour after hour passes; progress seems a mockery. If the W. face is loose, the E. face is a ruin. All the morning it was alive with stones.

The dawn had not been promising and the weather now showed signs of changing for the worse. We debated on our position. To go back was vetoed because of the dangers of the couloir which rains stones from an early hour. The E.

¹ Messrs. Young and Jones took the right branch.

² Punta Gugliermina, *ca.* 4000 m.



Phot. T. G. Brown.

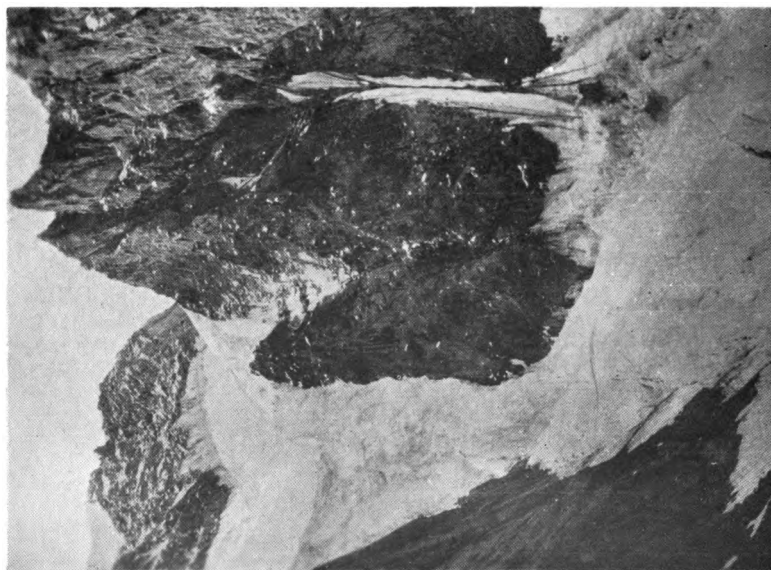
TAKEN FROM BASE OF "BENDING
RIDGE"

looking across branch couloir. Showing
average inclination of slopes.



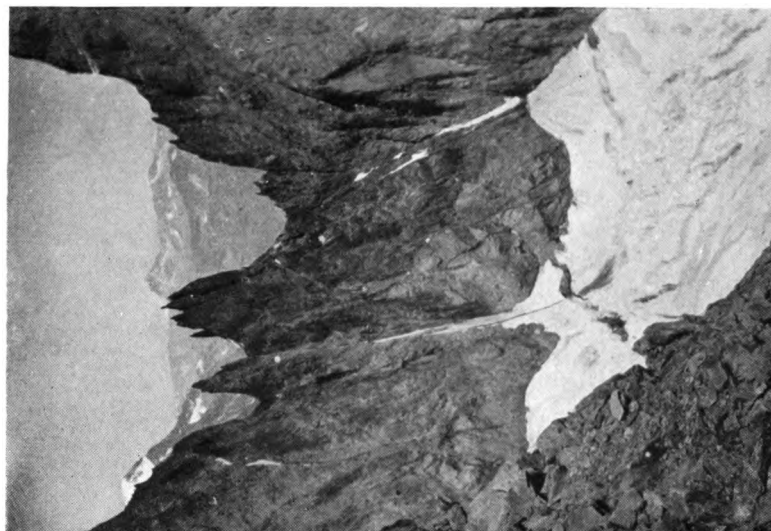
Phot. T. G. Brown.

THE UPPER ICE SLOPES BELOW THE UPPER SÉRAC WALL.



Phot. Hugo Müller.

THE ROCK BASTION OF THE COL DE
PÉTÉRÉT
from the Fresnay side.



Phot. H. Müller.

DAMES ANGLAÏSES AND BRÈCHES.

face was equally unpromising. We decided to go on to the Col de Pétéret.

It was snowing as we hurried over the summit ridge, while a fierce wind arose as we descended to the Col de Pétéret. Where we should normally have advanced both together, the wind enforced caution and we could only move singly.

At 3 p.m. we reached the col. A hurricane was now blowing on Mont Blanc and the noise of it resembled the deepest note of a great cathedral organ. The Col de Pétéret itself was a fearful sight. The snow came whirling through the gap in a furious writhing *tourmente*, while ever and anon came the mad crash of falling rocks from the crumbling cliffs on the Brenva side of the col.

We knew nothing about the route down to the Fresnay Glacier and were even unaware that it had never been descended, but we realised, through some curious inexplicable instinct, that it offered the best avenue of escape and we were determined to get down somehow.

A bastion of rock a thousand feet high falls from the upper bay of the Fresnay Glacier to the lower. The glacier itself is impracticable and drops in a nearly vertical wall of ice for many hundreds of feet. The rock bastion is thus the only direct line of descent from the Col de Pétéret.

High up, the rocks of the bastion are smooth and slabby and offer no belays or support. A slip must result in destruction to the whole party, and it is probably here that Professor Francis Balfour and his guide Johann Petrus lost their lives after what was, in all likelihood, the first ascent of the Aiguille Blanche. Against our will we were forced off the rocks into the couloir between the bastion and the Aiguille Blanche. But here, unexpectedly, we found good snow and proceeded quickly, keeping as close to the side as possible, for the couloir is constantly raked by stonefalls. Lower down, where the couloir narrows, the snow gave place to ice, and the danger from stones made a traverse back on to the rocks of the bastion advisable.

We were frequently in danger from stones *blown* off from above, while now and again gusts of enormous hailstones beat down upon us. At such times we could only crouch down close to the rocks. It was no time for half measures. We cut our rope up into loops, and using our 100 ft. line roped down. But these rocks are climbable and there is no question that a party retreating from the Pétéret ridge in bad weather will be well advised to follow this route in preference to the E. face where Herr Richardet was killed.

An awkward chimney, a short ice slope and a treacherously bridged bergschrund brought us at last to the Fresnay Glacier. Light was failing as we hurried down, wondering how we were going to fare on the sérac wall. But fortune favoured us and we found footsteps and a neat little staircase cut up a cunning recess between the séracs. It was the work of Josef Knubel in prospecting the route to the Col de Pétéret for Eustace Thomas's party. So down we went, and presently climbed the weary little couloir and loose rock face to the Col de l'Innominata.

It was almost dark when we reached the col where, with nothing but easy ground separating us from the Gamba hut, we paused to watch a baleful lightning flicker. With incredible rapidity the storm approached. Never had we seen such a storm. Its ferocity surpassed those of the Argentine. The ragged edges of the Brouillard and Pétéret ridges flamed with a continuous mauve fire, while the hollow roll of thunder was flung from precipice to precipice in tremendous waves of sound, until it seemed that we were enclosed within the jaws of some monstrous dragon breathing hatred upon the world. We heard afterwards that there was a cloudburst over Montreux and a storm of unprecedented violence over the Italian Lakes, but Mont Blanc was the presiding genius, and we stumbled down the moraine half blinded by the hail and electrical discharges.

At 9 P.M. we reached the hut. Our entry savoured of the best old-fashioned drama. The door opened to a blaze of lightning and crash of thunder and in we went. As one man the inhabitants arose from the bunks and cheered. Kindly hands pulled our sopping clothes off our backs; our boots from our feet. Exciting liquids were poured down our throats; a hot meal prepared. The return of the Prodigal Son was a poor affair compared to ours. And when at last our friends had ceased their ministrations we turned in, to listen thankfully to the straining of the hut on its wire leashes and the wild raving of the storm outside.

The Col Maudit.

In 1921 the Signori Gugliermina, de Petro and Ravelli made the first ascent of the Col Maudit from the Géant Glacier.³ It was

³ *A.J.* 35, 120; but see *Ibid.* 14, 151 for a *probable* previous ascent, 1888.

repeated from this side at a later date, while the first ascent from the N.W. was made by a French party, MM. Migot and Savard, in 1927.⁴ The pass has not yet been traversed.

On August 13, two days after our defeat on the Pétéret, Macphee and I walked up to the Col du Géant. The Torino hut was full of Italian Generals, Admirals and Marshals of the Air—to judge from the variety of uniforms and headgear; we lay awake all night unable to sleep.

We left thankfully at 12.30 A.M., and, in full moonlight, strolled over the snowfields.

The S.W. tributary of the Géant Glacier is secluded from the vulgar gaze. When the moon glances over the Tour Ronde and the shadow of the Trident de la Brenva is thrown like a devil's toasting-fork across the bosom of the glacier, the 'little folk who dwell in the hollow hills' steal out from the mysterious places in the cliffs of the Capucin. But, alas for imaginings, one ordinary remark was sufficient to restore the 'normal suburban equilibrium' of the party.

We crossed the bergschrund without difficulty at 2.30, and climbing in crampons ascended steep icy snow to a rock rib. The rock was good and we continued happily. A murmur above, sometimes swelling to a growl, spoke of wind, but as yet we were sheltered.

Rock climbing by moonlight is more dignified and restrained than in the day time. One advances leisurely, inspired by the absence of necessity for haste. There is none of the 'Come on,' 'Buck up,' 'Both together now,' sweating, hard breathing, late afternoon methods. Each hold is a link in a gradual progression, to be grasped contemplatively and its merits compared to its neighbours. Each little ledge is a resting place, a belvedere of dreamy moonshine.

A sérac wall several hundred feet high defends the col. We kept too high and were forced into a traverse to the left over nasty ice-glazed slabs, sprinkled with powdery snow. Dawn greeted us here; an uneasy sanguinary dawn, full of vague threats.

Continuing our traverse to the right we came upon a large cairn. A steep rock face above and an ice slope brought us to the ridge a few feet to the right of the actual col at 6.35 A.M. There we met a spiteful wind and with some absurd peak-bagging instinct, turned right and trudged up the Mont Blanc du Tacul. We rested there before returning to the col and

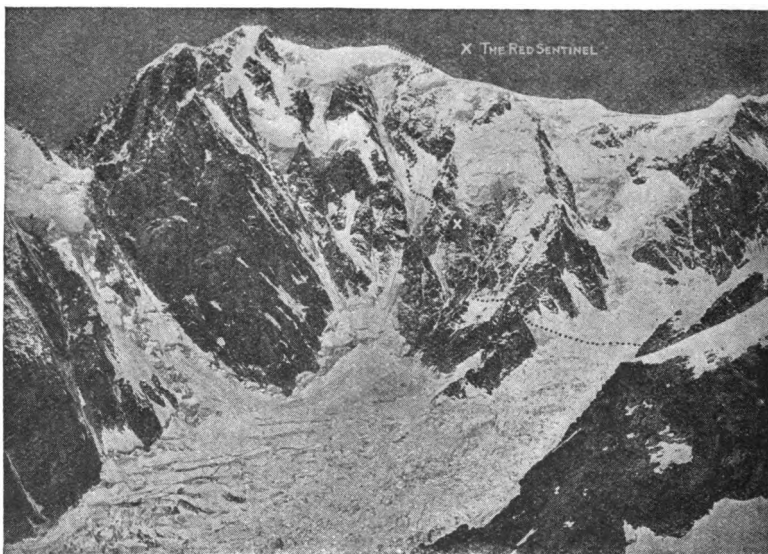
⁴ *A.J.* 39, 331; *Alpinisme* (8), 1927, pp. 250-7, illustrated.

traversing the Col du Mont Maudit to Mont Blanc. The wind was blowing the snow in clouds as we ground over the col and we struggled up Mont Blanc in the teeth of a full-fledged *tourmente* to find the French flag on the top fluttering in defiance (so we gathered afterwards) of the Italian flag on the summit of Mont Blanc de Courmayeur! The weather was worsening every moment and we hurried thankfully down the conventional groove, and, shortly after 6 P.M., were wallowing in hot baths at the Montenvers.

The First Ascent of Mont Blanc direct from the Brenva Glacier.

(Written in collaboration with T. Graham Brown.)

Towards the middle of August, T. Graham Brown and I were fortunately able to join forces. When I say fortunately,



BRENVA FACE OF MT. BLANC.
Showing Mr. Smythe's route.

I speak personally, for bad weather and the claims of civilization had taken my friends away and I found myself at the Montenvers with many cherished but unattempted ascents. Of these, the greatest by far was an attack on the unclimbed Brenva face of Mont Blanc. I was therefore delighted to find

that Graham Brown was equally fascinated by this great mountain-side. Indeed, he and E. S. Herbert had studied it previously. My own inclinations towards it had been considerably enhanced by the ease with which Ward, Bower and I had traversed the Col de la Brenva on August 1. If the snow, which so firmly adhered to the ice, lay uniformly on the face there might well be justification in an assault.

Graham Brown and I had both discovered that only the saving grace of patience, combined with unlimited time—in my case a convalescence—made anything possible. The hurricanes, blizzards, and thunderstorms of the early part of August had apparently settled down to their work in earnest towards the middle of that unfortunate month. One of the last to leave the Montenvers was E. E. Roberts who cheered us up by saying that there was no bad Alpine weather in the English sense. A subsequent postcard however tersely rescinded this theory. On August 21 we climbed the Petite Aiguille Verte under wintry conditions. The weather on the 22nd again brought disappointment, which was confirmed by even worse weather on the 23rd. We were reduced to planning desperate ascents on the aiguilles traced by the barograph. Helped by a judicious bang the unfortunate instrument would always rise nobly to the occasion, only to sink again lower than before. The other relaxation was the gambling machine—a remarkable source of revenue to the proprietor. Bell, I should add, had previously worked out the odds on every colour and had then wisely resisted its blandishments.

We finally decided on a walking tour, and were glad to miss the shocking railway disaster.

On the evening of the 26th we watched Mont Blanc from the Col des Aravis slowly disentangle itself from the storm clouds.

The weather on the 27th was perfect, and on the 29th we returned to the Montenvers. It looked at last as though we had the conditions for our climb.

On the 31st we trudged up to the Col du Géant, and on the way studied as much of the upper part of the face as is visible over the Tour Ronde ridge.

Some weeks before I had heard that Dr. Güssfeldt had studied this face, but decided against it on account of the great sérac wall that runs round at the top from Mont Blanc de Courmayeur to the Col de la Brenva. Again, it is remarkable that this 5000 ft. face had never been attempted. A few months previously Mr. T. B. Blakeney had suggested the possibility of an attack; Messrs. Young and Mallory had

studied it in the past, and so had others. It was an ambition of Dr. Preuss, and also of Dr. Grünwald and Herr Bischoff, who had perished under such sad circumstances on the Aiguille de Bionnassay in the previous bad weather. Indeed, I understand that they were at Courmayeur in August with the object of attempting it. Could the sérac wall be surmounted or turned? As we examined it through a small but excellent Zeiss monocular, we were overjoyed to see that the barrier would almost certainly be surmountable; but the decision must rest with the larger telescope at the Torino hut. Not the final decision—that must be left to the process of trial and error—*absit omen* . . . !

We arrived at the hut at 10.15 A.M. and spent the whole of the morning and afternoon in careful examination of the visible part of our route.

A magnificent couloir descends from just under the summit of Mont Blanc to the westernmost bay of the Upper Brenva Glacier. High up, this couloir is split into two arms by a curving rock ridge, the right fork of the Y, so formed, being comparatively short. The ridge ends above in the steep ice slopes beneath the point where the sérac wall is breached. In order to reach the curving ridge we must traverse across the foot of the branch couloir to the lowest point in the ridge and follow it up to the point where the upper ice slopes appear feasible. Through the telescope, these upper slopes seemed of an easy angle, but the telescope lied to us. Once on the bending ridge, however, we should be safe from ice avalanches and stones. But the branch couloir *must* be crossed early. To do this a secure bivouac as high as possible was essential; but all these problems must wait till the morrow.

All the afternoon we were faced by that terrible view. The huge Pétéret ridge to Mont Blanc de Courmayeur, and the 5000 ft. face of Mont Blanc sweeping round to the Col de la Brenva. How cold and repelling it seemed when the sun had left it, and the fear of it sank into both of us.

We left at 3.30 A.M. next morning en route to the Col du Trident. Our spirits, none too high at this hour, had been further lowered by an individual in the hut who spoke depressingly of 'warm airs.'

The snow was soft and the wind warm as we crossed the Col des Flambeaux. On the N. side the snow became softer and deeper. We waded on until we realized the immense labour and time involved in reaching the Col du Trident and we decided to postpone the climb for yet another day and

ascend to the Tour Ronde to examine the lower part of the face.

We gained the Col Est de Toule and turned N.W. along the frontier ridge, traversing the Aiguille de Toule to the first point of the Aiguille d'Entrèves. This was useless as a viewpoint, so we returned and descended on to the bay of the Géant Glacier lying between the Tour Ronde and the Aiguille d'Entrèves. A steep snow and ice slope led up to the E. ridge of the Tour Ronde.

As we topped the ridge Mont Blanc burst upon us in all its magnificence. Far beneath, the Brenva Glacier crawls down to the meadows of the Val Veni. All day long and all night its shattered ice-falls rage at the imperious behests of gravity and the grumble of their discontent echoes sullenly around the precipices that enclose them. Higher up the glacier relents, and at the head of the ice-fall is a little bay of snow, set like a peaceful strand 'twixt the frozen ice billows and the huge face behind.

To the right of the great couloir, at the point where it narrows, a conspicuous red buttress projects from the face. It looked perpendicular and we were at once assured that here—at its base—was the ideal situation for our bivouac. Not only was it placed in an exactly suitable position for a rapid traverse of the branch couloir early in the morning, but it appeared to offer the only completely safe site for a bivouac on the whole Brenva face. Two routes to it appeared possible. The first directly from below; the second by an upward traverse from the little 'col' at the foot of the Brenva ridge. In either case this little col, which we have named *Col Moore* in honour of the first conqueror of the Col de la Brenva, must previously be reached. So delighted were we with our bivouac rock, that we have since named it the Red Sentinel or *la sentinelle rouge*.

The Tour Ronde is no part of a rapid or easy route from the Col du Géant to the upper Brenva Glacier; moreover, it was 10 A.M. Nevertheless we decided to push on with the climb. In this we were influenced by the perfect weather and the good snow on all southerly faces. The latter enabled us to traverse directly across the S. face of the Tour Ronde, thereby saving probably two hours. We descended from the Col Occidental de la Tour Ronde to the Brenva Glacier, walked across the snow bay, and climbed a short but very steep little slope to the Col Moore. We at once saw that the direct route up from the Brenva Glacier to the foot of the

Red Sentinel was not to be thought of, as it involved an extremely unpleasant descent from the Col Moore to the glacier. The upward traverse across the face from the lowest rocks of Moore's ridge above the Col Moore was the right route. To reach these rocks we had to worm our way along a sharp crest of ice, artfully overlaid by slushy snow, and an hour passed before we reached the rocks, just below the first big gendarme in Moore's ridge.

Here we halted, ate, dried our clothes and waited for the sun to pass, before starting on the traverse which involves the crossing of four couloirs.

We had arrived at this point at 2 P.M. and had two or three hours to wait. We were now confident and happy. The unknown lower part of the route, which we had feared most, was now known. We rested eyes and minds on the Pétéret ridge. If foreshortened, it was yet grander than ever. We heard the roar of falls from it, but so vast is the scale we could see no falling débris.

The sun left us at 3.52, but we waited until 4.50 for the snow to harden properly. The first couloir was simple, our 10-point Eckenstein crampons gave splendid purchase on the steep hard snow. The second couloir was seared by an avalanche groove 10 ft. deep and took some time. The last couloir is liable to be swept by falling séracs, but we raced across in a few seconds to the friendly shelter of some rocks. The whole face was as silent as the grave and we had not seen the smallest stone fall. A mixture of rocks, ice and snow took us up to the base of the Red Sentinel at 7.10 P.M.

A big inward tilted slab lay beneath, covered by a cone of snow and ice. Twenty minutes' work sufficed to fashion an alcove, protected at both ends, and large enough for our *Zdarsky* tent-sack. To prevent any possibility of a nightmare roll to the Brenva Glacier we drove our axes in above and securely fastened the rope thereto.

We unpacked our sacks, made a hot soup and settled down to await the night. This was not long in coming. As the sun set, we saw the beautiful phenomenon described by Leslie Stephen in his classic essay 'Sunset from Mont Blanc'—the immense shadow of the Monarch sweeping the ranges and finally mounting the sky. Like Stephen, we were privileged to witness that other sun whose rays are shafts of darkness, but which are actually the parallel shadows of Mont Blanc, apparently converging on the horizon.

Yet day lingered awhile, and long after the fires were quenched

and the pageant had passed on its way, an ashen glow steeped some stately cloud pillars brooding in the S. We expected to see them lightning-lit later, but on this most perfect of late summer nights even the Thunder God slept in his couch of *cumuli*.

The air was very still. Not a breath of wind whispered around the stern figure of the 'Sentinel' above. It seems absurd to invest a mere rock with the attributes of sympathy and understanding; but all that night a friendly presence encompassed us, watching over the two little things that were men, who shivered and kicked and swore on that hitherto untrodden mountain-side.

The night was long and bitterly cold. No comfort was to be found in our *Zdarsky* tent-sack. As a means of refined torture these tent-sacks are admirable. The idea is that the two victims sit inside facing each other. A few minutes of partial suffocation follow until at length, unable to gasp longer without fresh stimulus, the edge is raised and a gush of cold new air rudely forces its way into the carbon-dioxidized interior. The inside of the tent is meanwhile saturated with condensed moisture, which drips unpleasantly down the neck. In fairness, however, it must be admitted that one of these tents might prove of the greatest service to a party forced to bivouac high up in bad weather.

All night long the noise of the rock and ice falls was almost continuous, chiefly from the direction of the Pétérét ridge, but one colossal fall of séracs was overhead, and the cataract of ice divided by the 'Sentinel' thundered down the couloirs on either side a few yards away. We made several brews of tea and it was during one brewing that three long-drawn moans came up from the Brenva Glacier beneath. No doubt their origin was prosaic, but to us the effect was weird in the extreme.

Sleep was impossible and it seemed as though the world were given over to perpetual darkness and cold. But at long last grey dawn filtered up from far Tyrol. We made tea, ate some chocolate and painfully strapped on crampons over the boots we had not removed all night. The iron stuck to our fingers with cold.

At 5.30 we passed out from beneath the 'Sentinel' into the couloir on the left of it. We climbed up and across this at the greatest possible speed, and soon gained the ridge at the edge of the great couloir. There can be no finer couloir in the Alps than this immense chute. In the middle runs an enormous

groove of polished black ice writhing down like some evil serpent.

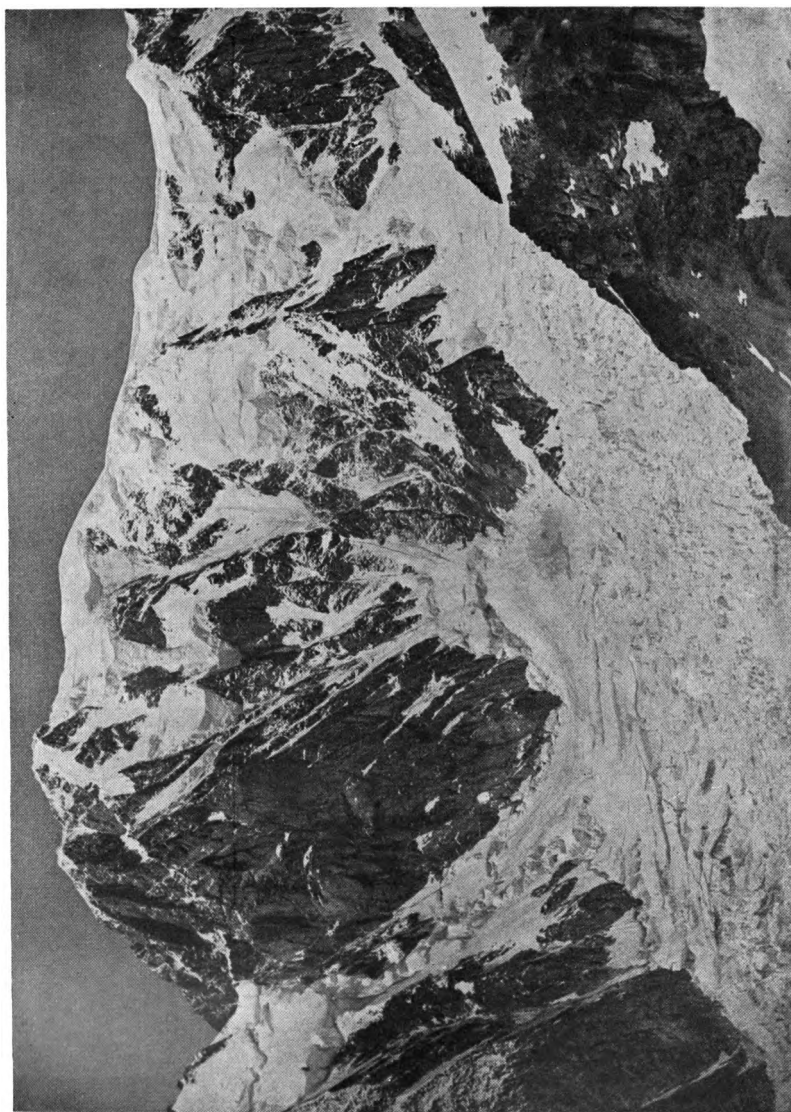
We descended into the couloir, and, keeping close under the ridge, commenced the ascent. Nothing could touch us, for a friendly rock promontory projected ahead and the hard snow over which we mounted was smooth and unscored. The angle is over 50° , but our crampons ground well into the icy snow. Yet speed was essential if we were to cross the branch couloir in safety to the curving rock ridge. At top speed we laboured on until we were nearly level with the lowest of the scattered rocks at the foot of the curving ridge dividing the main from the branch couloir. Then we rushed the branch couloir transversely towards them, finding with thankfulness that its deep avalanche channel went easily. At length we were on the ridge in perfect safety. Not a pebble had fallen.

Above was a gendarme with a perpendicular face. Below this at 7.10 we sat down and rested for an hour. Our exertions up to this point had been severe. Just before starting again we saw the first stones falling down the couloirs on either hand. We thought that above the climbing would become progressively easier; but here the telescope had entirely misled us and we found the exact opposite to be actually the case. There was, in fact, only one short portion on which we were not moving one at a time. Such is the reality that perspective may clothe with fantasy on high mountains.

The rock was unexpectedly sound, a grey red granite affording delightful climbing. We turned the red gendarme on the right and gained the ridge above over steep ice. A narrow snow edge followed and we were again forced to the right over very steep ice under some rocks; we then climbed back to the ridge and continued over rock to the nearly horizontal crest separating the head of the branch from the main couloir. This crest abuts against a rock face. It was 10.30 A.M. and we sat down to another meal. Some way below us on a ledge lay a piece of wood like an aeroplane strut, or it may have been a bit of the old Jansen Observatory.

The view was now magnificent. The ice ridge of the Brenva had sunk below us. A violet haze filled the Italian valleys over which the distant snow peaks of Cogne rose like fairy castles from a sea of dreams. Far above in grim reality loomed the final ice-wall.

After building a cairn and leaving our names in a jam tin, we set out again at 11.45. Continuing along the snow crest,



Phot. Alfred Holmes.

THE BRENVA FACE OF MONT BLANC.

76 *The First Ascent of Mont Blanc direct from Brenva Glacier.*

Great clouds stood up out of the valleys in perpendicular columns like genii; the haze in the Italian valleys had deepened to purple. We turned and trudged down the track to the Vallot hut where, in spite of the filth, we spent a comfortable night.

We returned to the Montenvers next day *via* the Dôme du Goûter and the Tête Rousse.

The proprietor and Josef Knubel joined us over the inevitable champagne. We were very happy. Before passing into sleep that night we both realized that rain had come down in torrents within ten minutes of our arrival at the Montenvers.

Les Courtes from the Glacier de Talèfre.

A week of bad weather followed our traverse of Mont Blanc and all Graham Brown and I were able to do was an ascent of the Grands Charmoz. We were on the point of leaving when a temporary break tempted us up to the Couvercle hut. It also tempted several dozen other people.

It was snowing in desultory fashion when we awoke next morning, but at 5.50 A.M. we staggered from the combined third-rate cinema-hall *cum* eating-house atmosphere of the hut and gratefully gulped the fresh air. We had breakfast on a boulder before reaching the Glacier de Talèfre and afterwards walked up the glacier to the foot of the 2000 ft. rock face of Les Courtes. No one appeared to have climbed direct up this face, though a continuous buttress dropping from the summit offers the obvious and most direct route up the peak.

The buttress is undercut and glaciated at its junction with the ice and we mounted a short distance up the couloir dropping between Les Courtes and the Aiguille Croulante. A steep little chimney and a short rock wall brought us to the crest of the buttress. The rocks are easy and we scrambled leisurely upwards. A curious bent crack, avoidable on the left, afforded a slight diversion, followed by 1000 ft. of easy scrambling towards the foot of a fine red tower. Below the tower the buttress constricted to a narrow ridge. The climbing here redeems the ascent from mediocrity. A traverse over snow-masked slabs, and again an ascent to the buttress crest above the tower, brought us to easier ground leading without difficulty to the summit at 2.30 P.M.

The weather was not good and we hurried down *via* the Col de la Tour des Courtes. The descent was a misery, the snow being in execrable condition. We collected our belongings at

the Couvercle, chatted with Monsieur de Ségogne, and as dusk was falling set off for the Montenvers.

It was dark ere we left the rocks, and we flitted like disembodied spirits from moraine heap to moraine heap at the junction of the Glacier de Leschaux with the Mer de Glace.

The scene was a remarkable one as we trudged down the Mer de Glace. In front over the Aiguilles Rouges a range of livid thunderclouds were illuminated every few seconds by fountains of lightning. Behind all was peace; 'The cold ice slept' in radiant moonlight.

I rashly promised a quick route off the glacier, but only succeeded in getting into a maze of great crevasses. Finally we stood on a knife edge of ice, with the conventional abysses on either hand, while the lightning winked sardonically and the thunder rumbled with merriment. But at last Graham Brown's better sense prevailed; we retraced our steps and finally got off and down to the Montenvers. It was snowing next day and we left for England.

KILIMANJARO IN 1927.

By Miss SHEILA MACDONALD.

[The substance of this account is contained in a letter to Mr. Claude and Mrs. Macdonald, to whom we offer our best thanks.—*Editor 'A.J.'*]

MOSHI,

TANGANYIKA TERRITORY,

August 2, 1927.

MR. W. C. WEST of the Alpine Club and I have climbed to the top of Kilimanjaro, and no woman has ever succeeded in getting there before. Kilimanjaro consists of two mountains—Kibo (19,710 ft.) and Mawenzi (17,300 ft.), separated by a 6-mile plateau. Mr. West and I and Major O. Lennox-Browne climbed Mawenzi first, choosing our route as we went, at least Mr. West did, and got to the highest point which had been reached by two German parties, both in 1912. We found their names and records in an old tin built into the cairn and added our names on the same piece of paper.

Our camp was at the foot of Mawenzi, but we could not stand the height for two nights running, and had to descend to 12,700 ft. again before attacking Kibo. Mr. West and I were

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the only two to reach the top of Kibo, as Major Lennox-Browne, who suffered from the altitude, could go no further than three-quarters of the way up. I never knew that mountain sickness and lack of oxygen could be so awful. And now I had better start from the beginning, as otherwise half the account will be left out.

The three of us joined together at Mombasa and came straight on here, branching off the main line at Voi. At Voi we got a 'water train' to Moshi, the only conveyance for nearly a week. It stopped every four miles to distribute water at wayside halts, and we travelled all day on the footboards—eight hours, and arrived at Moshi looking like Red Indians from the red dust. Here we stopped the night and just long enough next day to collect provisions, a cook, and a personal boy. Then we travelled for 2½ hrs. on a Ford lorry with our camp equipment all about us, through scrub and up and down gullies—a most amazing road. I sat next to the native driver, and he was the best thing in chauffeurs I have ever seen—nothing abashed him, we took logs and ravines in our stride. We got to Marangu in the evening and interviewed Mlanga, the Chief of the Wachagga, who was to provide us with fourteen porters to take our stuff to the highest hut on the mountain. He gave us eggs, milk, and a leggy fowl, and I gave him a postcard of Kilimanjaro. He let us camp in front of his Council House. All our porters were rounded up by him, he sent out his 'Royal Crier,' a picturesque gentleman in a blanket, who called the tribe together by making strange noises on a koodoo horn.

From Marangu we climbed up to Bismarck Hut through dense forests very much like those Knysna forests in South Africa, but more tropical—amazing creepers and lots of signs of elephant. Bismarck Hut suffered a lot during the fighting with Smuts, etc., but still offered the shelter of thick walls and a tin roof. It is high up on the mountain with a wide view of the plain, copper-coloured in the sun, while we were in shadow and mist in the middle of the cloud-belt which always encircles Kilimanjaro. This is one of the things that make the mountain so wonderful. It rises straight from the plain in one sheer mass, but the base of it is always separated from the top by this circle of mist and fleecy cloud, so that the great dome of smooth snow looks completely detached from the earth like a great moon hanging in heaven, especially at night when it looks too beautiful for description.

We left Bismarck Hut on July 27, and got above the cloud-belt into the sun again through a district of sweet-smelling

K180, 19,710

MAWENZ1, 17,300



Phot. Miss Macdonald.

From the edge of the forest belt, about 11,000ft.
View towards S.E.

Pieters Hut, getting there at 8 p.m. Major Lennox-Browne was rather seedy, and suggested a day's rest, which we had and enjoyed, though I rather wanted to have a 'go' at Kibo while keyed up to the struggle. So Friday was a slack day, and on Saturday, July 30, we climbed up to the plateau again and made for the foot of Kibo, where there is a cave (Hans Meyer's Höhle), where we meant to spend part of the night. The plateau was a horrid grind, slightly uphill all the way, drifting sand and the wind in our faces. When we got to the other side we discovered that the four porters we had chosen for the last lap to the cave did not know where it was, so we hunted about the rocks until I found a beauty, well sheltered, with a sandy ground—'The Sheila Cave' this is to be called. We turned in while the boys built a large fire in the entrance. Mr. West's idea was to start the climb at midnight, so as to get to the top at sunrise, before the heat of the sun made the ascent too difficult in soft snow. However, we only had a lantern, which was quite inadequate; it went out five times before we decided to wait till daybreak and risk the soft snow at the top. We settled down in the scanty shelter of a rock and waited 3 hrs. for light to come; then started the most awful climb for hours upon loose rocks, stones, and sand; everything you put your foot on slipped back with you, and after 3 hrs.' hard climb we looked up and seemed to have made no progress. At first we rested every hour, but at about 18,000 ft. we dragged ourselves for about 20 ft. at a time with stops between each bit to get our breath in working order. However much one gasped and panted, nothing seemed to get into one's lungs. I was rather ahead of the others, because I had found some firmer rock at about 800 ft. from the crater's rim. When I found that the others were not following I *cooed* several times, and finally Mr. West came round a mass of rocks—by himself! Major Lennox-Browne was completely finished, and could not go a step farther. I can't understand how Mr. West could keep going, when he had been sick and dizzy with nausea. I think he was feeling rather weak just here, though he didn't give in. Well, up to this point I had been wondering several times how long I could stick it out, but I braced myself up and was comforted by feeling that I was not the weak one of the party. Mr. West and I had a good dose of whisky and lime juice out of our drinking bottle, pulled ourselves together, and went on. We reached the crater's edge at Johannes Notch, and bore round to the left, past Stella Point (reached by the Kingsley-Lathams last year) and on round the crater to Kaiser Wilhelm Spitze, the highest point, reached once

before by Mr. West, in 1914, when he was the first Englishman to make the ascent.

We crawled to the summit foot by foot. I am not being dramatic, it really was like that. It was just in front of us, and I thought we should never get there. You can't imagine the relief of leaning up against the cairn and realizing that we were there. We inscribed our names in the pocket-book that is hidden in the cairn, and split a bottle of champagne carried all the way from Moshi for the occasion. We had poor Major Lennox-Browne's share as well, but unfortunately had to drink out of the bottle and got very little but fizziness—better than nothing, though.

Several women have reached the crater's rim, but very few people have been beyond—no women. The inside of the crater is amazing. Imagine a huge bowl of ice with hanging glaciers all round its inside walls and two great lakes of greeny-blue ice at the bottom of it, huge crevasses and séracs around its rim. I have never seen anything like it. The cold made it impossible to stay up there for long, so we took one or two photos and followed our tracks back to the crater's rim.

The way down was ridiculously easy ; we just 'glissaded' down steep slopes of lava-dust and small stones, and it took us less than 2 hrs., though we took a wrong turning near the bottom and found ourselves in a narrow gully with a sheer cliff at our feet, dropping a good 80 ft. to the plateau. So we retraced our steps again (more upward scrambling !), reached our cave just in time for a 20 minutes' rest and a cup of tea before starting on the 4 hrs.' tramp to Pieters Hut again—anything for comfortable grass bunks and a good night's rest.

Darkness overcame us on the way, and we got lost and had to squat down where we were, with a huge fire lit as a signal to the boys at the hut. They found us at about 10 p.m. and led us to Pieters Hut with great torches of sweet-smelling shrub. There was much waving of branches to make the sparks fly. What a day ! and the next morning we had to walk 25 miles to Marangu ; dropping 8000 ft. in 7 hrs.

So now it is done, and I would not have missed it for the world, though I cannot say I ever want to do Kibo again. Mawenzi I should like to do dozens of times.

We have a lorry to take us and our luggage to Nairobi to-morrow, about 250 miles, as the train does not go until Saturday.

You cannot imagine how splendid Mr. West has been on this expedition, always cheerful and most optimistic. The boys

loved him, and he always managed to get things done, though none of them spoke a word of English, and all we could say in Swahili was 'tea,' 'coffee,' 'water,' and 'prepare food.'

[In the interests of historical accuracy we reprint a letter from Mr. W. C. West published last year in the South African press.]

SIR,—As I predicted in the articles I wrote describing the recent ascent of Kilimanjaro by Miss Sheila Macdonald and myself, a considerable controversy has arisen in England, East Africa, Germany, and probably elsewhere as to who amongst lady climbers was really the first to have ascended to the very highest point of this great mountain.

Since our ascent was recorded I have myself read of four claimants to this distinction, three, it will be noted, not personally, but through their friends.

I will deal with them *seriatim* :

1. A friend of Miss Gertrude Benham wrote in September to the London *Times* under the pseudonym 'West African' stating that this lady ascended Kilimanjaro some sixteen years ago. It is perfectly clear from Miss Benham's own description, which appeared at the time in the *Mountain Club of South Africa Annual* in the form of a copy of a letter from her, that she only reached a point on the eastern rim of the crater. It should be pointed out that the E. rim of the crater is much lower than the remainder of the circle with the exception of a huge cleft to the W., the highest point of all being to the S.W.

2. A Tanganyika friend of Mrs. Kingsley Latham (now of Tanganyika), visiting England, wrote to the *Daily Mail* (October 3) advancing the claims of this lady to a prior ascent in 1925 and stating that Mrs. Kingsley Latham carried her husband on the final stages of the ascent. I found it trying to carry a rucksack with a little food, wine, and a camera inside. Mr. and Mrs. Kingsley Latham reached a point now called in her honour Stella Point, and do not themselves claim to have been to the summit. Stella Point is a little beyond and slightly higher than Johannes Scharte, which is sometimes called Gillman's Point.

3. A Mr. Watt, presumably a relative, writes also to the *Daily Mail* (October 3) stating that Miss Stuart Watt of Marangu, Tanganyika, also reached the summit on September 19, 1926. This lady reached Johannes Scharte (notch) on the eastern rim of the crater and herself claims nothing more.

It took Miss Macdonald and myself about two hours to reach the highest point after leaving Johannes Scharte.

4. Fräulein Müller wrote a somewhat assertive letter to the *East African Standard* of September 21, claiming to have been to the summit with Herr G. Nordhaus on July 7, three weeks before our ascent, and basing her claim upon the fact that 'her name appears above Miss Macdonald's in the records kept on the mountain.' So it does, in the records kept in the tin at Johannes Scharte, but their signatures are not to be found in the record book proper at the summit of the mountain. Since I left East Africa, Major Perkins of Moshi, Tanganyika, has made exhaustive inquiries into this claim and in a letter to the *East African Standard* (October 17) he completely demolishes it.

Fräulein Müller and Herr Nordhaus were associated with a film production and ascended to the rim of the crater on three occasions—June 27, July 8, and August 28—with a different native guide upon each occasion. Major Perkins, at considerable trouble, has interviewed each guide and taken statements from the three of them.

Fräulein Müller and Herr Nordhaus in their letter claim specifically to have reached Kaiser Wilhelm Point on July 8 (not 7th). Of this, Major Perkins reports that 'Mikane of Mamba, the guide on that occasion, was absolutely definite in his replies and most emphatic in stating that neither Fräulein Müller nor Herr Nordhaus went further than Johannes Scharte.' Major Perkins's own conclusions are 'that from the evidence of the guides, it would appear that Fräulein Müller and Herr Nordhaus did not reach Kaiser Wilhelm Spitze. I am convinced that . . . their letter was written in good faith, but the evidence of all the guides is so strongly against them.'

All of these climbs are worthy of admiration, but they can not be claimed as complete ascents of Kilimanjaro.

Whilst on this subject I might mention that in the 1927 edition of the *South and East African Year Book* it states that Messrs. Gillman and Nason made the first British ascent of Kilimanjaro in 1921. Messrs. Gillman and Nason reached Johannes Scharte only, claiming nothing more themselves. This point is now sometimes called Gillman's Point, though Mr. Gillman himself and those who know the origin of the naming of Johannes Scharte deprecate any change being introduced.

I reached the real summit in June 1914.

I should make it perfectly clear that in no instance is wilful misrepresentation suggested. The whole trouble arises from

the fact that there is a general looseness in the use of mountaineering terms amongst members of the community not directly interested in mountaineering. The crater of Kibo is known to crown the mountain, and if anyone has viewed the interior of the crater it is quite understandable that their friends would imagine that they had been to the top of the mountain. But to mountaineers an ascent means a climb to the very highest point, wherever that may be.

It may be advanced that I have been somewhat too dogmatic and assertive in my statements above, but I have investigated in detail and studied the climbing records of Kilimanjaro for some years, and I wish these points cleared up and controversy avoided in years to come.

To the best of my knowledge, the following is a complete list of the ascents of Kibo and Mawenzi to their respective highest points :

KIBO.

- 1889 (Oct. 6) Professor Hans Meyer and Ludwig Purtscheller.
- 1909 (July 6) Herren Max Lange and Weigele.
- 1912 (Dec. 3) Walther Furthwängler and Siegfried Koenig.
- 1914 (Feb. 13) Walter von Ruckteschell and Carl von Salis.
- 1914 (June 10) William C. West.
- 1925 (Dec. 5) G. Londt with Oforo (native guide).
- 1926 (July 4) Dr. D. V. Latham with Oforo (native guide).
- 1927 (July 17) Rev. R. Reusch with Oforo (native guide).
- 1927 (July 31) Sheila G. Macdonald and William C. West.
- 1927 (Oct. 14) Rev. R. Reusch with Oforo (native guide).
- 1927 (Oct. 27) Herr Zeidler.

MAWENZI.

- 1912 (June 29) Dr. Fritz Klute and Eduard Oehler.
- 1912 (Nov. 27) Walther Furthwängler and Siegfried Koenig.
- 1927 (July 28) Sheila G. Macdonald, Major O. Lennox-Browne, and William C. West.

There is no evidence or proof whatever that any lady other than Miss Macdonald has been upon the highest point of Kibo, and, with regard to Mawenzi, which she also ascended, no prior claims have been advanced.

I am,

Yours truly,

(Signed) WILLIAM C. WEST.

THE ALPINE CLUB, LONDON.
November 16, 1927.

SOME JOURNEYS THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS OF
ICELAND.

By ATHOLE MURRAY.

IT was Lord Dufferin's 'Letters from High Latitudes' that first turned my thoughts to Iceland, and in 1912 I made a first trip to a country that has never ceased to cast its spell upon me.

That journey consisted of nothing more than a fortnight's ride through the ordinary tourist district of the S.W., with an ascent of Mount Hekla, but it was enough to create a strong desire to see more, and in 1925, and again in 1927, I returned to make more extended tours through the interior.¹

It should be remembered that Iceland is the second largest island in Europe, being about 7000 square miles larger than Ireland. Even this comparison hardly suggests its true size so far as the traveller is concerned, for the means of communication remain to this day almost as they were a thousand years ago. There is still no railway in the country, and only a few roads which are confined almost entirely to the immediate vicinity of Reykjavik and certain other ports. Whoever wishes to penetrate far inland must do so on pony-back, and carry tents and provisions with him. Only in this way will he be able to reach, or even to see, the almost inexhaustible supply of striking peaks, glaciers, lava streams, moors, deserts, boiling springs and great waterfalls.

By comparison with the Alps, the mountains are not high. But such a comparison is hardly fair, since many of the Icelandic peaks rise directly out of the sea. Öraefajökull is no mean mountain. Its icy dome stands 6400 ft. above the ocean that washes its base. It is the highest point of the largest glacier system in Europe—about 3000 square miles in area.

The panorama of the glacier mountains of the S., as viewed from the sea, is on a clear day exceedingly fine. Even Henderson who visited the country more than a hundred years ago found it beautiful, though he apologised for his opinion. 'When the tediousness of the voyage is taken into consideration,' he wrote, 'an allowance will easily be made for my attaching the idea of beauty to these perennial masses of snow, notwithstanding the revolting presentiment of cold which necessarily

¹ In 1925 and 1927 my wife was my travelling companion.

forced itself into my mind.' Henderson's book on Iceland remains to this day one of the best ever written. He was a born traveller and a keen observer, but naturally—considering the date at which he lived—not a mountaineer. He tells us that on one occasion he could not look down into the 'dreadful abyss' without being 'sensible of the most disagreeable emotions,' and that he 'felt a desire to remove as quickly as possible to a safer and more agreeable scene.'

Some travellers have spoken almost contemptuously of the Icelandic mountains. The great 'jökulls' have been dubbed squat tablelands of ice, Hekla and other isolated volcanoes mere ash-heaps. They have been accused of showing little beauty of form and less of colour. This criticism seems to me to be the result of a first impression, which is reversed by a more intimate acquaintance. It is a mistake to judge them by the standard of other mountain systems better known to us. They have, owing to their volcanic origin, a strongly marked individuality and character of their own. The rocky pyramid of Maelifellsnokr in the N. is a thing of beauty from whatever direction it is seen. In the W., the symmetrical cone of Snaefellsjökull rises to a height of 4700 ft. from the ocean that surrounds it on three sides. The sun, setting behind this peak, as seen across the Faxafjord from Reykjavik eighty miles away, makes a picture not easily forgotten. The huge dome of Eyrik's Jökull in the interior of the country forms as perfect a skyline as any mountain I have seen. These are all noble mountains, and there are others to equal them, while the supply of smaller peaks, hills perhaps in height but true mountains in formation, is inexhaustible.

The following is a brief sketch of the three trips it has been my good fortune to make in Iceland.

In 1912 we rode from Reykjavik across the moor to the historic valley—if indeed a sunken plain may be called a valley—of Thingvellir, the 'Parliament Plain'; thence, next day, to the Geysirs, which if they are not quite so big as some of the old pictures suggest, are in fact more impressive than those pictures lead one to expect. A couple of hours' ride beyond the Geysirs thunders the great waterfall of Gullfoss, 'Golden-force,' for Hvítá is a glacier river, and its waters are bright brown in colour. Gullfoss is one of the sights of Europe. In breadth, volume, and situation it surpasses any fall I know.

An ascent of Mount Hekla was then undertaken. From the farm at which we passed the night the return expedition took twelve hours. We rode to within two and a half hours of the

summit and then walked. There is no climbing difficulty whatever, but the ascent is well worth making, and the view from the highest point most impressive. It is quite un-alpine in character, as indeed are most Icelandic panoramas. 'Solemn' is perhaps the best word to express the feeling it produced.

After Hekla we paid a visit to Thorsmörk in the Markarfljot valley. This valley contains very striking mountain scenery. There are a number of fine gorges, and icefalls from the glaciers of Eyjafjalla reach down very nearly to the valley floor along which rushes a formidable glacier river. This river divides into many streams which frequently change their beds. Fording is sometimes difficult, but must be constantly undertaken. A local guide is essential. The way these men can read, from the surface of the water, the nature of the ground below, is wonderful. Their eye can detect, it seems, even a submerged quicksand. When crossing one stream we could hear boulders being swept along beneath the murky water, and hoped they would miss our ponies' legs. The return journey from the mouth of the Markarfljot valley to Reykjavik took three days in the saddle, but as there is a road it can now be quickly covered in a car if desired.

In 1925 a rather more extensive trip was undertaken. As far as the Geysirs the old route was followed. Immediately N. of these there lies a large mountain district culminating in the enormous Lang Jökull. Leaving Austurlid farm, near the Geysirs, we were among the mountains surrounding the Utliðhraun in about an hour. These hills are barren and precipitous, striking in form and colour. The volcanic rocks of which they consist are of a reddish-purple colour, and they are well set off by a foreground of grey-brown lava.

On this day's ride there was no track of any kind, for though the route passes through magnificent scenery, it is but seldom followed. To miss the way would be easy should fog come on, and in that case the chief difficulty would be, not so much to find a way out as to find it before the ponies had broken down for want of grass and water. As our guide had never been this way before, we took a local man from the farm to lead us as far as the Hellisskard ('Cave Pass'), which was reached in three hours. The approach to the pass was steep, and we scrambled up the last few hundred feet on foot, the ponies—tied to each other, the head of one to the tail of the next in front—climbing up like cats in a truly astonishing manner. The pass leads to entirely new country—a vast stream of contorted lava, quite barren. The winter frosts

have so shattered the rock, that the surface now consists of splintered blocks of jagged lava varying in size from pebbles to large boulders. Out of this elevated plain of lava rise a number of peaks—the Skridutindar, ‘slipping mountains,’ whose name tells of the rottenness of their rocks, the Högnhofdi, the conical Skialdbreid, and, close at hand, the mighty Hlodu-fell. This last is a really fine mountain. Its summit consists of a small, flattish glacier, guarded on all sides by splendid rock precipices. At its base, to the S.W., is an excellent camping site with water and plenty of good grass. I inquired as to the possibility of climbing the peak, but was told the mountain was unsuitable for climbing as it was ‘too perpendicular’! Most unfortunately, time did not allow us to make the attempt. It appears to offer an interesting climbing problem, and from its position it must be a wonderful view-point.

We rode for twelve hours that day over the wildest, ruggedest country imaginable. But it was never monotonous. Far from it, for when we had passed the lava flood, there followed some river-flats where fast galloping was possible; then a number of rocky ridges, rather like moraines, were crossed; after that we seemed to be riding down broken cliffs that were nearly vertical. At long last we rode, or rather we slithered down a snow slope and reached the oasis known as Egil’s-a-fangi, only to find that our camping-ground was, owing to the recent rains, a foot under water. Some of us tried to keep the ponies from scattering whilst the others went off in search of a dry patch of ground, which was found in about half an hour, and soon the tents were pitched.

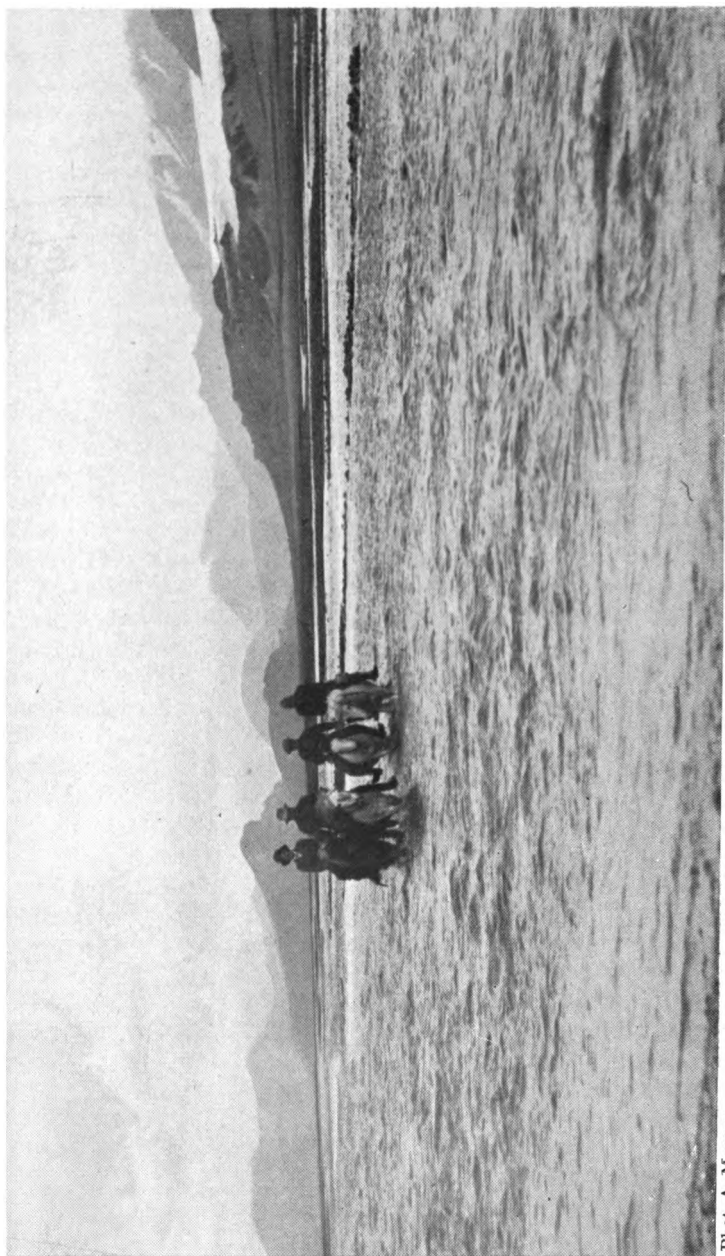
Next day we crossed the Kaldidalur (‘Cold Valley’), a long, bleak, wind-swept pass some 2000 ft. high. The mountain scenery here is very fine. On either side, and close at hand, are glaciers. On the right (E.) descend many ice-falls from Geitlands Jökull; to the left rises the crevassed dome of Ok Jökull.

This route is delightful in good weather and at the height of summer. Early or late in the season, however, it may be dangerous, as the following account will show. Nearly a hundred years ago, an old and very experienced shepherd passed this way with a boy and several ponies. It was late in the summer and bad weather presently set in. A blizzard swept the pass. The boy was ill-clad and soon became numb with the cold. When it became evident that he was on the point of collapsing, the shepherd did a desperate thing. With his knife he killed one of the ponies, and when he had dis-



Phot. A. Murray.

THE SKRIDUTINDAR.



Phot. A. Murray.

NEAR THORSMÁRK.

embowelled the beast, he put the boy inside as in a bed. Throughout the night the old man paced up and down with the other ponies. In the morning the storm died down, the rising sun warmed up the pass and the lad's life was saved. Such grim resourcefulness amounting almost to inspiration seems worthy of being recorded.

After the Kaldidalur expedition we left the mountains till we reached the Hitardalur, which lies at the eastern end of the Snaefell peninsula. This valley is strikingly wild, and a very rough and cavernous stream of lava has to be crossed. The peaks are not great in height, but they have the appearance and character of true mountains, and are not mere hills. A couple of days were spent in camp at Hitarvatn, which is as lovely a lake as the Italian Alps can show. In fine weather it is gentian blue in colour, and it is full of trout which may be caught for the asking.

There followed an exciting journey to the head of the Hvamsfjord. The mountains in this district recall somewhat those of our own Snowdonia, but they are bigger, and sterner in aspect, and the valleys are like deep narrow gorges. There is very little track that the eye of a foreigner can detect. Indeed, I believe this route is hardly ever taken by travellers. It is only visited by the shepherds who come up every autumn to collect sheep that have spent the summer months in the mountains. On this day a valuable trout rod fell accidentally from a pack pony and was lost. We searched for it for some time, but might as easily have found a needle in a haystack as retrieve so small and inconspicuous an object in such country. All the same our guide was confident that it would be found. He promised to ask the shepherds to look for it at the sheep-gathering in the autumn. We were not hopeful, especially as the nearest farm was a full half-day's ride away. Yet the rod was returned to me the following November, having been found by a farm boy. Shepherds whose eyes can detect a straying sheep or pony far up in the mountains will not easily overlook any object, however small, that they are looking for. And their honesty equals their eyesight.

From Hvamsfjord we turned S., first crossing the Brattabrekka ('steep slope') pass and then skirting the western shoulder of Mt. Baula. Baula is a conical peak of red rock, 3000 ft. high, and has never yet, so I was told, been climbed from the W., its steepest side. Unfortunately time did not allow us to attempt it.

S. of Mt. Baula the country becomes hilly rather than

mountainous, but is always interesting. In fact the journey round the head of the Hvalfjord is most beautiful, and the basalt cliffs of Mt. Thyrrill very tempting. S. of Hvalfjord lies another mountain district comprising the Sandfell peak, Mt. Esja, and the steep and wild Svinaskard pass which we crossed on our way back to Reykjavik.

The summer of 1927 saw us back again in Iceland. The weather that season will long be remembered as the finest and driest for twenty years. There was only one thoroughly wet day during the six weeks in which we rode across the whole country from S. to N., and back again to the S. across the central desert. Of course there were heavy rainstorms at times, but these must be expected in Iceland, as in other mountainous countries.

Leaving Reykjavik at the end of June, we rode N. over country that has already been described till we reached Reykholt, the home of the poet-historian-statesman Snorri Sturluson. The boiling springs in this valley are both numerous and interesting. One of them, named Arhver, squirts continually a small jet of scalding water from a mound in the middle of the river. Another feeds the large open-air hot bath, built by Snorri hundreds of years ago, and supplies steam for modern radiators to the old earth-built parsonage, which, unfortunately, is soon to be demolished and replaced by a house of reinforced concrete. From Reykhott we rode to the comfortable farm of Husafell, and then forded the turbulent Geitá whose swollen waters had barred our way two years before. Soon we reached the wide flood of ancient lava in which are the caves of Surts-Hellir. These caves have been formed by gigantic bubbles of gas generated in the lava at the time when it was beginning to cool down. They are certainly worth a visit. The entire surface of the lava is to-day covered by dead moss, ash-grey in colour, and there are miles and miles of it. This moss is slowly collecting enough dust to support a few alpine flowers, and already some flourish in the hollows formed by gas bubbles whose roof has fallen in. But at present the landscape is that of a country burnt up. A few miles to the E., however, rises one of the grandest mountains in Iceland, the glacier-capped Eyrik's Jökull. It is a really noble mountain. The curve of its dome of ice is a perfect thing, and from the glacier that covers it great icefalls descend on all sides over its precipitous cliffs.

This was one of those days that remain fixed in the memory. There was perfect stillness and utter desolation out of which

stood Eyrik's Jökull, the sky (I quote the late Lord Bryce) 'raining down brightness' on to the desert floor. 'And the silence, what was ever like it? A silence, not as of death, but as of a time before life was.'²

After fording the deep but not very difficult Nordlingafjot which flows at the edge of the lava field, we pitched camp on a pleasant grassy meadow where our only visitors were a few wild swans and geese, and next day rode in a N.E. direction to Arnavatn, the large lake associated in the Saga with the name of Grettir the Strong, who fled here for safety nine hundred years ago. Our track was stony and barren, but every now and then we passed a sheltered spot where there was grass thickly covered by wild flowers, mostly purple geranium. The ground rose steadily and the ice-fields of the Lang and Eyrik's Jökulls slowly receded. We were now in the district known as Fiskivötn (fish lakes), an elevated tract of country honeycombed with lakes of all sizes. The smallest are mere tarns while the largest measure several miles across. All, or nearly all, are as full of trout as they can be, and on their surface live wild swans, geese and other birds. The number of these lakes is said by the people to be uncountable.

Camp was pitched at the head of a water-fall that connects an upper lake with the larger Arnavatn some 60 ft. below. It was as lovely a spot as the heart of man could desire. Spaciousness was its keynote, spaciousness and wildness and entire absence of anything artificial. On one side shone the glaciers of Lang Jökull, on the other lay the great lake and the moor.

Reference has already been made to an old shepherd who saved a lad's life in rather an unconventional way in Kaldidalur. The same man passed this way, and on one occasion had a gruesome experience. Summer was nearly over and it would have been safer to take the longer 'post-road.' But the shepherd knew his country so well that he was justified in risking the direct cross-country route. He travelled on foot, and alone save for his dog. Night had fallen when he reached the small earthen hut at Arnavatn, and it was very cold. As he had no candle he began to eat his supper in the dark, but the dog refused to join him. Nothing would persuade the animal to remain in the hut, so his master investigated, and presently found a corpse frozen stiff on the couch at the farther end. On reporting the matter at the first farm he reached, he

² *Memories of Travel.*

was asked if he had not been afraid to spend the night with such company. 'At first I was afraid,' he replied, 'for I thought that as soon as I slept he might come over to me. So I pulled him across the room and used him as a pillow. Then I feared no longer, for I had him safe under me.'

Of the ride from the lake Arnavatn to the Vatnsdal ('lake valley') I will only say that it took ten hours, riding as fast as the nature of the country permitted. The distance is forty miles, but we added to this by missing our way soon after starting. From the highest point of the 'Heithi,' which is a great wilderness of stones and bogs and hills, we could see the purple mountains that guard the entrance to the Vatnsdal. Yet, though we rode fast, and hour succeeded hour, they seemed to get no nearer. We had a feeling as of riding in a treadmill. A few birds circled round. Once, an Icelandic falcon flopped off a neighbouring rock after eyeing us with some suspicion. There was no wind, and the air was filled with soft sunshine and a silence that was almost uncanny.

But when at last we reached the head of the valley we were once more in truly mountainous country. The scenery was very grand, and the only remaining difficulty was the crossing of a number of small but really bad bogs. Bogs terrify the ponies, and some of our animals—including the one I was riding—went in up to the middle. In the end, after much wandering around in search of *terra firma* we got through, and reached the farm of Hawkagil.

In the Vatnsdal is a tract of ground several miles long and over a mile in breadth, which descends from the hills into the valley floor and is said to be an ancient moraine. It is, however, thickly covered by large sugar-loaf cones, some of them almost as big as small hills. They are not unlike the slag-heaps of our own Black Country, but are of a warmer colour. I was unable to discover exactly how this interesting formation came into being. I have never seen anything else like it, and it remains, as far as I am concerned, an unsolved puzzle.

We reached the N. coast at the port of Blönduos, and rode thence across the mountains to Saudarkrokur. The peaks here are rather like the Welsh hills, but they are on a bigger scale. The route crosses two distinct mountain systems, and two unbridged rivers, which must sometimes be formidable, have to be forded.

From Saudarkrokur a day's ride brought us to Holar, a most interesting spot rich in historical associations, it having been the old episcopal see of northern Iceland and a famous

home of learning. To-day its cathedral, a small, plain, but not undignified building of red stone, contains some splendid relics of pre-Reformation days.

But Holar has other attractions. It stands in a noble situation on a level green meadow of rich pasture land surrounded on all sides but one by steep mountains. It is a true gateway to the hills, and from it radiate a number of valleys that all invite exploration.

From Holar we journeyed to the Eyjafjord over the high mountain pass known as Heljardalsheithi ('Hell's valley high-ground'), which is a really fine expedition. A local man was hired at Holar to show us the ford through the rapid Kolká. After crossing this big river we turned into the Heljardal. Unfortunately a recent flood had swept away the bridge over the unfordable Heljará which rushes down the cañon, so we had to keep on the N. side of the torrent and get our ponies up as best we could. There was no track on this side of the valley, and at first the ground was much too steep and rough to ride up, but presently we got into the saddle and rode over some of the most sensational steps it has been my lot to meet on horseback. My admiration for the skill, strength and willingness of the Iceland pony became greater than ever. On this day we rode sometimes on 'knife-edge' ridges, at other times on a narrow ledge at the very edge of a precipice. Yet the ponies never hesitated. Presently we crossed a number of snow patches and snow-filled gullies, and as we neared the summit of the pass the slope became less steep. We then rode on to a wide field of névé into which the ponies sank knee-deep. The pack ponies and the spare ones made straight for any rocks that stood up through the snow, only to find the snow near the rocks cavernous, so that they plunged about in it up to their bellies. For our part, we dismounted and led our ponies.

The actual summit (the height of which is given in an old guide-book as 4500 ft.) is a large and nearly level snowfield. A fine rain swept across the pass so that much of the view was hidden. It must be very grand in clear weather. On each side rises the icy dome of a jökull. The top of the Unadalsjökull to the N. was just visible, and looked but a short distance above us. The descent was rough and rather steep, but there was no difficulty until we reached the floor of the valley. We then found that the bridge over the Skallá had been carried away, and we had a little more excitement in fording the river than we thought necessary. That night we stayed at Urdir

farmhouse. From this place to Akureyri, the northern capital, need not be described here, for it is hardly a mountain journey. But the way along the shore of the Eyjafjord is as lovely a ride as can well be imagined.

After a few days' rest at Akureyri, a short trip was taken to the E. From Akureyri to Hals is a beautiful ride. You start at sea-level and follow a straight track that rises by a comfortable gradient to a height of 2300 ft. And you have the whole forty miles of blue Eyjafjord in front of you all the time. When we were there, there was neither cloud nor haze, so that the fjord and its coasts lay below us as on a map.

From Hals to the waterfall of Godafoss is only two or three hours' ride. The fall is not gigantic like Gullfoss its rival in the S., or Dettifoss its neighbour to the E.; but its breadth, its semi-circular shape and the convenient rocks from which it can be viewed, make it one of the finest falls in existence.

We had intended to visit the big Myvatn ('Midge Lake') famous for its wild birds, and had hoped to see something of the volcanic district in which it lies, but we had to give this up—or at least postpone it—as our time was running short.

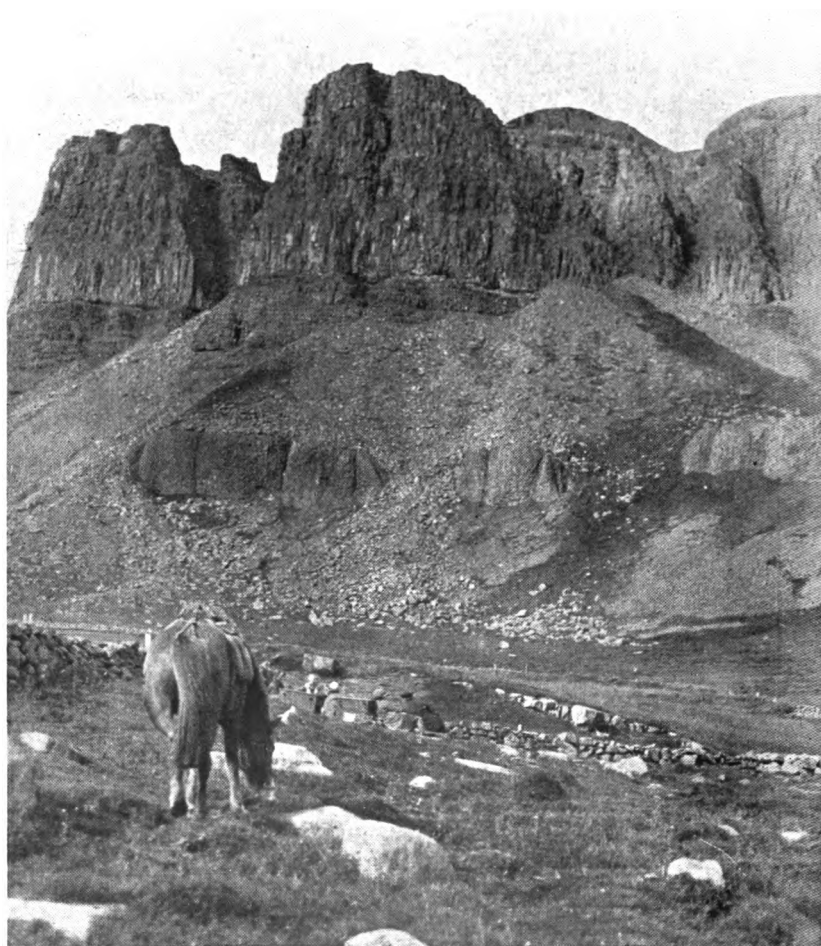
On the return journey to Reykjavik we followed what is known as the Kjöl route across the central desert.

Leaving the Eyjafjord we turned up the Hörgardalur, and some hours later branched off into the Öxnadalur, reaching Bakki farmhouse in the evening. All day long the scenery had become more and more mountainous as we proceeded. There are a number of really striking peaks in the Öxnadalur, or rather in the range that divides it from the Hörgardalur, notably one that closely resembles the Aiguille de la Za as seen from Arolla. The next day's journey was rather a long one over the pass of Öxnadalsheithi. Here again the mountain scenery was very grand, the river Heiderá tearing through a deep-cut cañon. Unfortunately, clouds covered the tops of the high peaks. Heavy rain fell during the last two hours of the journey and a strong wind drove it in our faces and soon discovered any weak spots in our oil-skin suits. It was 9.30 p.m. when we reached the farm of Silfrastadir where the household were all in bed and asleep. For although 'telephone time' is official in Iceland, nearly every farmer in the country advances his clock by one or two hours during the summer months because he finds it suits his work. So it was 11.30 p.m. by the Silfrastadir clock when we got there. All the same, a boy rolled out of bed at once and led our ponies off to grass through the drenching rain, while the lady of the house prepared us



Phot. A. Murray.

GODAFOSS.



Phot. A. Murray.

MT. THYRILL.

coffee and 'skyr.' Now to be kept waiting when you are tired, rather wet and very hungry, is not pleasant. But in Iceland where time is of so little account, and no one ever seems to hurry, the traveller who arrives unexpectedly at a country farmhouse must be prepared to be very patient. Coffee cannot be served instantly, for there is no hot water laid on—or cold water either for that matter. Nor is the fire kept burning. The only fuel consists, as a rule, of cakes of dried sheep's dung, very much like peat. When this has been lighted and coaxed into a fire, water must be fetched—often from quite a distance—and boiled on it.

The hospitality of these good people is truly wonderful, and the almost unvarying cheerfulness with which they put themselves out to do all they can for the passing traveller is an ample compensation for the small discomforts that are bound to be met with now and again.

Next day we rode down the valley and crossed the Hèrads-vötn by the ferry. It takes a full hour and a half to get the whole cavalcade over these rivers by the ferry. There is so much unloading and loading up again of pack-boxes, and so much trouble in inducing the ponies to get into the boat, as well as several journeys backwards and forwards.

Beyond the river are the wide marshes of Vidimyri, and after that, a bridle track over the Vatnskard. On the farther side of this pass there was as uncomfortable a step to negotiate as I ever remember meeting. In rounding a bluff that overhung the swiftly rushing Svartá river we found our already diminutive path entirely washed away. Nothing remained but hard smooth, slippery clay inclined at an angle that was much too steep to be pleasant. So we dismounted, and with unnailed boots and no handholds to help us, clambered gingerly round. All except our second guide who, trusting his pony more than himself, rushed at it and came safely round with a scraping of hoofs and a loud laugh.

Before us flowed the great Blanda river, quite unfordable here. There is, however, a cable ferry which we used. That night we stayed at Gudlaugstadir farm. It was the last house we were to see till we reached the S. of the country five days later.

S. of Gudlaugstadir the country is very wild. There are but few landmarks to guide the stranger, while there are some very large bogs to worry him. So we engaged the farmer to guide us past these. With him as *local* guide we travelled fast, and soon realized how much time must necessarily be lost

by a general guide who has to use his brains to find his way over unfamiliar country. At the end of three and a half hours' riding the farmer returned to his home, and then our troubles began. Even the ponies seemed to know that they might now wander out of the way (in different directions at the same time) and that now they could break their girths and shed their packs with impunity. The guides were much too busy discussing the way to pay much attention to anything else. There was, of course, no track at all, and the only thing we had to guide us, beyond a general sense of direction, was the Blanda river which was somewhere—out of sight—to the E. Our guide led us cleverly, though a trifle circuitously. Once he went off to prospect, leaving us with the curt command: 'Stay here till I return.' We waited on marshy ground while the wind got up and for a time blew a fine rain at us. At the end of a damp and dismal hour our leader returned, merely remarking: 'Now, follow me.' He had found the Blanda and was happy again. He now led us over wild moorland where the ground consisted of innumerable hummocks divided from each other by deep water-cut ditches. The ponies leapt from hummock to hummock. We found it rather a slow and fatiguing method of progress, but at 7.45 P.M. the desired camping ground was reached.

Next morning at sunrise a thin white mist covered the ground. Above it, to the N.E., rose the pyramid of Maelifell-snokr looking very much like the Weisshorn—though really it is, of course, much smaller. The air was perfectly still, and the rising sun filled the whole sky with primrose light. When we got on our way, its warmth drew aromatic scents from the brushwood of the moor. Except for birds—swans, geese and others—there was no sign of life. It was a strange, solemn, silent world in which we seemed intruders. Suddenly our guide gave a shout of satisfaction; he had seen a cairn and knew exactly where he was. He had struck the Kjöl-route just where he meant to.

I should like to say a word in appreciation of my guide, Mr. Ögmundur Sigurdsson, of Hafnarfjörð. Probably no man has travelled in Iceland as much as he has, and he has all the qualifications of a first-rate guide, being as prudent as he is enterprising. Besides all this he is a most interesting and learned man, and a good linguist.

As we rode the landscape changed in character. Vegetation became scanty and then ceased altogether. We were in a brown, burnt-up desert on to which the sun poured a flood of

brightness. Round us rose small but striking mountains. At 7 p.m. we reached Hveravellir—the plain of hot springs—and pitched camp. The sense of utter isolation here is most impressive, and to my mind, stimulating. The place is a small oasis in the strip of desert land between Lang Jökull and Hofs Jökull, and it takes its name from the large group of boiling springs that roar and squirt unceasingly. A stream descends from the springs, and the mineral deposit from the hot water has lined the bed of the stream with a smooth hard surface like marble. We soon found a pool that was cool enough to get into, and had an ideal hot bath.

That evening the sunset was as wonderful as any I have seen. A mackerel sky that glowed first amber, then orange, salmon, crimson, purple and violet. Owing to the fact that the sun scarcely sets at this latitude in summer, we had a crimson after-glow on the glaciers of Hofs Jökull that lasted, not a few minutes, but for several hours.

We took a day of rest at this interesting spot, and spent it in washing clothes, writing up journals, and scrambling about the rocks.

Next day we crossed the Kjöl lava. It was terribly desolate but most interesting. The actual lava stream took nearly two hours to cross, the ponies picking their way in a wonderful manner over its jagged surface. On its farther side, the rivers were all flowing S., for we had crossed the water-shed, and were once again in southern Iceland. That evening we camped as near the shore of Hvítárvatn as the boggy nature of the ground would allow. Hvítárvatn (the white lake) is a fine sheet of water, about eight miles in length, and perhaps three miles in width. It lies immediately to the E. of Lang Jökull, which sends down two huge ice-falls into its waters. The séracs are large, and stand, as near as it was possible from our camp to guess, about 50 ft. out of the water. We could hear the roar of ice avalanches, and many icebergs floated about the lake. Hundreds of wild swans greeted us excitedly as we approached the shore.

Next day we had a fairly long ride round the base of Bláfell, an isolated glacier-capped mountain, to a camp by the Griotå river. From this camp it was a day's journey to Austurlid farm. The weather had been very hot for the last two days, and violent rainstorms had circled round us, but had left us dry. The most vivid and brilliant rainbows had appeared with startling suddenness, and a big dust storm had raged near Lang Jökull to the N. The columns of dust that were sucked

up into the sky after the manner of water-spouts must have been at least several thousand feet high. Although we were but three or four miles from the storm, there was not a breath of wind on the stony waste over which we rode. Presently we exchanged the desert for pasture land and halted for food outside a small farm—the first human habitation we had seen for five days. Soon, however, distant thunder spurred us on. The thunder grew louder, some of the ponies became nervous, and we rode fast. As we reached the Geysirs the storm broke and soon it was raining in true Icelandic fashion. There was no shelter, for the old inn had been removed years before, and the new one was not finished, so we reached our night quarters a trifle bedraggled.

The rest of the journey was not strictly mountainous, though it skirted a number of quite good peaks. It included the lovely Thingvellir lake and the Sog river with its three glorious falls within about a quarter of a mile of each other. There is one drawback to the Sog and its neighbourhood. It is the worst place in the country for flies. On a bright, windless day of summer the sky is black with them. The ponies must be housed in a barn; if left in the open for more than a moment, they will bolt. As we rode away, we could hardly hold the poor beasts in, and yet in a quarter of an hour we were clear of the midge-infested area, so local is the nuisance. I should add that although the midges at the Sog were numbered by millions, we were by no means eaten up. Indeed I have often been far more bitten in the Alps than I have ever been in Iceland.

If I am asked how Iceland strikes the mountaineer, I find it a little difficult to give an accurate answer, since mountaineers are of many kinds. I do not wish to exaggerate the attraction of a country simply because I happen to love it myself. The mountains are not only smaller than the Alps, but are quite different in character and appearance. Many of them are very fine. Still, the man with a short holiday, who wishes, not unnaturally, to get in as many peaks as the limited time at his disposal will allow, will probably be wise to avoid Iceland. For Iceland is not a country of ready-made climbs. No funicular helps the climber on his way, and often no track exists to lead him to his mountain. This last point means a good deal. It is possible that some of us hardly realize the immense saving of time and labour that is implied by even a rudimentary track. Such a simple walk as that from Zermatt to the Riffel Alp would be quite an undertaking were there no

path at all. Such pathless conditions are common in the more remote districts of Iceland. So it often takes a long time to reach any particular mountain. Then the weather is subject to very sudden changes, and the method of travelling, though delightful, is slow. Accommodation at the farm-houses is quite clean though often rather rough. But the man who can spare a little more time, who loves *all* mountains for their own sake, who can be content even though his list of summits gained is short, so long as he himself is constantly moving among the mountains, who can enjoy the rather rough-and-tumble, open-air life that is forced upon him—this man will find in Iceland, with its primitive life and its unspoilt countryside, a land that will draw him back again and again. Nor will he get only mountain climbing. There is the joy of riding and fishing, the interest of the abundant bird-life, the scenes of historic sagas, and of course the extraordinary geology of the land.

It is said that two things are generally necessary to a successful trip in Iceland: good weather and a good guide. I have always had the latter and quite often the former. There is, however, a third necessity with which fortune has also favoured me—the ideal companion.

'MYSTERY MOUNTAIN.'

By W. A. DON MUNDAY.

'MYSTERY MOUNTAIN'¹ has been officially named Mt. George Dawson by the Geographic Board of Canada to commemorate the eminent Canadian geologist whose name is borne by Mt. Dawson, which is also in British Columbia in the Selkirk Range. The newly named mountain in the Coast Range is, according to Mr. J. E. Umbach, the surveyor-general of British Columbia, the highest mountain in the province, its height being 13,260 ft.

It has not yet been completely conquered, the writer's party in 1927 having reached over 13,000 ft. on the third attempt, but being defeated by a violent storm. A bivouac at 8700 ft. was rendered untenable by the storm, so the descent was continued

¹ See *A.J.* 38, 343, and 'Canadian Notes' of present number. We are in no way concerned in the matter, but the change of name seems regrettable.—*Editor.*

to the base camp at 4200 ft.; we reached it 39 hours after beginning the climb from the bivouac. The other members of the party were Mrs. Munday and her sister, Mrs. E. M. McCallum.

The mountain stands 25 miles N.E. of the head of Knight Inlet, and its largest glacier extends to within 6 miles of tide-water and 500 ft. above sea-level. Its area is about 100 square miles.

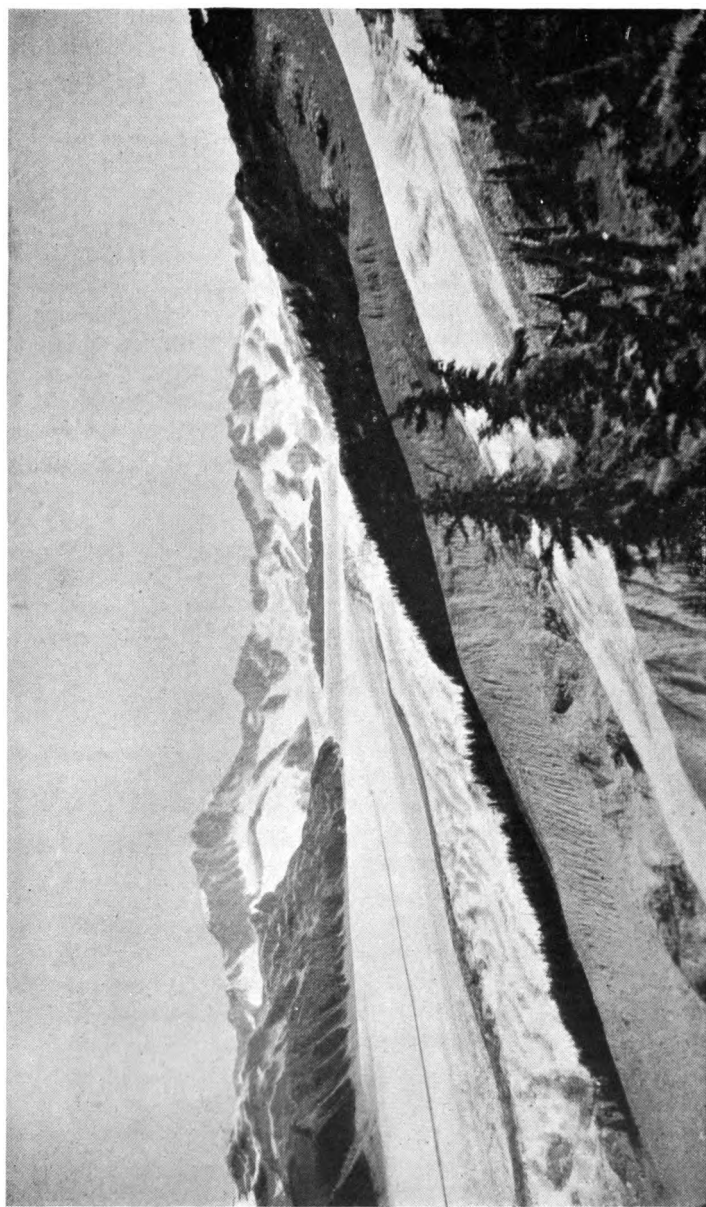
We cut a trail 6 miles up the Franklin valley and 'back-packed' all our own supplies. This route was considered highly preferable to the 1926 route up the Homathko River, and will be used again for the 1928 attempt on the big mountain. It is our intention to place a climbing camp at 10,500 ft. on the mountain because of the length and difficulties of the summit ridge. The *personnel* of the party has not been decided but will include the writer and Mrs. Munday. The latter suggested the route which proved so nearly successful and which seems the only practicable one in view of the physical difficulties of the surroundings of the mountain.

From Chilko Lake for a hundred miles N.W. the Coast Range has something approaching a definite crest with scores of peaks over 10,000 ft. in height; many are over 11,000 ft. (two have been triangulated at over 11,700 ft.); several probably exceed 12,000 ft., while the highest has been triangulated at 13,260 ft. as already stated.

The Bella Coola, Klinakline and Homathko gorges are incised completely across the range where it attains its maximum elevations; 30 miles from its mouth the Homathko River is only 500 ft. above sea-level. Even the Fraser River cañon is flanked by no such uplifts as these.

The main river valleys have been explored long ago, but the areas between are so rugged and so defended by large glaciers that exploration will probably be left entirely to mountaineers as has been the case up to the present. The consistently rugged glaciers are apt to make strangers to the region seriously underestimate the time required to cover a comparatively insignificant mileage.

In spite of the tremendous snowfall in the Coast Range, the climate of the seaward slope is comparatively mild and the vegetation is very dense. Except in the matter of winter temperatures, conditions thus bear a considerable resemblance to those in the Selkirk Range. The scenery also more nearly approaches that of the Selkirk Range, with the difference, of course, of more extensive glaciers.



Phot. W. A. Don Munday.

"MYSTERY MOUNTAIN," 13,260 FT. FROM HEIGHT OF 5,000 FT.
from S.W., distance 12 miles.

[Mr. Munday writes :—

‘ I venture to enclose a brief reference to “ Mystery Mountain,” in which you showed some interest last year. As you will note, we failed to reach the top by about 200 ft., due entirely to the most violent electrical storm I have ever experienced. We were within that short distance of the North peak at 7 P.M. We still think we showed good judgment in retreating as we did.

‘ The next “ Canadian Alpine Journal ” will carry fairly full accounts of our two expeditions into this rather remarkable region—I say “ our ” and “ we ” because my wife is even more than my lieutenant in every phase of the task.

‘ The mountain is now recognized as the highest in British Columbia, 13,260 ft. We have waited two years almost for vindication of our claim of its pre-eminence, most local climbers having been openly scornful. It is a strange thing, indeed, that this nearness to the mountain should produce such unbelief when those far off were more readily convinced.’]

NOTE ON MT. OLYMPUS.

(I) **T**O the list of books and articles on Mt. Olympus, which is to be found on page 96 of ‘ A.J.’ 39, the following may be added :

Francis P. Farquhar : ‘ An Ascent of Mount Olympus, Thessaly, Greece,’ in the *Sierra Bulletin*, vol. ix. No. 4, January 1915.

Francis P. Farquhar : ‘ An Ascent of Mount Olympus in Thessaly, Greece,’ in *The Mountaineer*, vol. xiv., 1921.

The above two articles give an account of the author’s ascent to Skolion with A. E. Phoutrides in April 1914.

G. R. is the signature of an account of the celebration of Mass, according to the Roman Catholic form, on the summit of St. Elias in 1918. This account appears in *L’Illustration*, Paris, No. 3957, January 4, 1919.

Winona Bailey (‘ Eight Days on Mount Olympus in Thessaly,’ in *The Mountaineer*, vol. xv., 1922) describes her ascent with Mrs. Laurie Frazeur on August 4, 1922. On July 31 they had reached the lower summit of Stefan, where they built the cairn ; but they were unable to reach its higher summit. On both occasions the ladies were accompanied by Kristo Kakalos.

(*The Mountaineer* is the journal of The Mountaineers, Seattle, Washington, U.S.A.)

Richard Halliburton: 'The Glorious Adventure.' With Roderic Crane and a shepherd lad, whom they called 'Lazarus,' he ascended Mitka (wrongly called by him the Throne of Zeus), apparently by way of Skala. They were not skilled mountaineers, and were detained on the summit by mist till nightfall. A miserable night was passed under the lee of the cairn, a heavy thunder-storm adding to their discomfort. The weather cleared before midnight, and the morning was brilliantly clear. This ascent seems to have taken place in the early summer of 1925.

Daniel Baud-Bovy, in 'Le Haut Olympe' (*L'Illustration*, Paris, No. 4417, October 29, 1927), describes the ascents made by himself, with F. Boissonnas and others, in 1913, 1919, and 1927.

(II) The following is a complete list of the ascents of Mitka and Stefan, so far as they can at present be ascertained:

A. Ascents of Mitka.

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. Aug. 2, 1913. | D. Baud-Bovy
F. Boissonnas
Kristo Kakalos |
| 2. July 21, 1919. | D. Baud-Bovy
F. Boissonnas
H. Boissonnas |
| 3. July 20, 1920. | Giorgio Kostandakos ¹ |
| 4. Aug. 12, 1921. | M. Kurz
Kristo Kakalos |
| 5. Aug. 16, 1921. | F. K. Kuhn ²
Kristo Kakalos |
| 6. Aug. 4, 1922. | Miss Winona Bailey
Mrs. Laurie Frazeur
Kristo Kakalos |
| 7. 1923. | Helmut Scheffel ³ |

¹ M. Kurz writes: 'I found the name of Kostandakos on a loose slab of the highest peak. This man seems to have been alone, probably some shepherd or hunter. He was unknown to Kakalos.'

² A Russian Officer.

³ There is some doubt about this ascent. The account in the *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Arch. Inst. Ath. Abteilung*, Band xxxvii., is as follows: 'Bei unserer Besteigung des Olymp in Sommer 1923 suchten wir. . . . Auf der höchsten Spitze haben wir keine Spuren einer antiken Kultstätte gefunden, wohl aber auf einem der Vorberge, der etwa eine Stunde südlich vom Hauptgipfel sich erhebt und ausweislich

A. Ascents of Mitka (continued).

- | | | |
|---------------------|-------|---|
| 8. | 1925. | Roderic Crane
Richard Halliburton
'Lazarus' |
| 9. | 1925. | St. Kotsios ⁴ |
| 10. Sept. 3, 1926. | | L. A. Ellwood
W. T. Elmslie
C. M. Sleeman
A. E. Storr |
| 11. Sept. 12, 1927. | | D. Baud-Bovy
F. Boissonnas
W. J. Ellison
Twenty-two others |

B. Ascents of Stefan.

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| 1. Aug. 12, 1921. | M. Kurz
Kristo Kakalos |
| 2. Aug. 16, 1921. | F. K. Kuhn with
Kristo Kakalos |
| 3. Sept. 3, 1926. | L. A. Ellwood
W. T. Elmslie
C. M. Sleeman
A. E. Storr |
| 4. Sept. 11, 1927. | D. Baud-Bovy
F. Boissonnas
Capt. Demesticas
A few others

W. T. ELMSLIE.
C. M. SLEEMAN. |

unseres Höhenmessers etwa 2900 m. hoch ist, vom Hauptgipfel also nur ungefähr um 100 m. überragt wird. Hier glaubten wir Altarreste zu erkennen und lasen zwischen den Steinen des Gipfels einige hundert Scherben auf. . . .’ E. Richter, however, writes as follows : ‘ I asked Helmut Scheffel at that time by letter for particulars about his ascent but could not get any detailed information. He has *not* been on Mitka or Stefan, but on a “Nebengipfel etwa 1 Stunde südlich vom Hauptgipfel.” I think it must have been Sara. He intended at that time to visit the highest point on a later occasion.’

⁴ This name is inscribed on a rock at the summit. No particulars are to hand.

OLYMPUS : AN INTERNATIONAL EXPEDITION.

By W. J. ELLISON.

TWENTY-ONE persons left Marseilles in September last on board the *Patris II*, under the auspices of the French and Swiss Alpine Clubs, to climb Mt. Olympus. At the head of the party was M. Fred Boissonnas, who with Daniel Baud-Bovy first reached the summit in 1913. It included Baud-Bovy, his son, and a group of girl guides (whose agility won them the sobriquet of the 'gazelles') from Geneva, Dr. Etienne May of the G.H.M. of the C.A.F. and several others from Paris, Professor Ximenes, the Spanish expert on things Hellenic, an American, and an Englishman. M. Bourdon, who published an excellent series of articles on the expedition in the *Figaro*, says with justice : ' De ces ascensionnistes pas un n'était de ces grimpeurs de carrière dont la mission semble être d'escalader tout ce qui se dresse dans le ciel. Presque tous, au contraire, intellectuels ou artistes, se présentaient . . . avec plus de volonté que d'expérience, et il est trop évident que, s'ils se trouvaient un matin réunis au pied de cette montagne, c'est qu'elle s'appelait l'Olympe.'

In Athens we were joined by Mr. Agapitos, Mr. Johannides (director of the Neptos Steamship Company), and a party of Greeks organized by the Hodoiporikos Syndesmos (' Club des Marcheurs '), the Touring Club and the Boy Scouts Association. Moreover, the Greek Government lent its warm support to the expedition. M. Georgalas, director of the Geological Bureau, was appointed to accompany the party ; while by the provision of motor transport, tents, a train of army mules with their ' agoyates,' and a body of light mountain troops (' Evzones ') everything possible was done to facilitate the arrangements—even to the extent of the passing of a special Parliamentary decree for our convenience to allow of the boarding of a goods train by ordinary passengers in the valley of Tempe !

Two days and a night in Athens, with a wonderful moonlight picnic in the Acropolis, and (again by special procuration) at 6 a.m. on September 9 we were discharged by the Orient Express at the little seaside station that connects with Litokhoron. Omnibuses took us over an amazingly bumpy road to the village, where we had a scanty toilet, breakfast in the pic-

turesque café, and a highly interesting half-hour with the mules.

When at 8.45 A.M. the procession filed out of the village we were 105 strong—some forty-five 'tourists,' with fifty odd mules and their muleteers, a goodly patrol of Evzones (furnished, I feel, more by courtesy, and perhaps with a true Greek sense of the picturesque, than for security), and the trusty Kristo Kakalos, the chamois-hunter who had served with Boissonnas and Baud-Bovy on their original expeditions and is now the proud possessor of a printed visiting card bearing the words 'Hodigos Olympou' (guide of Olympus) !

The clouds were low, and only by an occasional break could we catch a glimpse of the mountains in the distance. As we set out, the rain began. Following the regular route described by Mr. Elmslie (in 'A.J.' 39, 86-99), we halted at Stavros (the Cross) at midday, and reached the monastery of St. Dionysius in the early afternoon. The tents were pitched outside the walls beyond the monastery and half-way to the Vythos, which provided a delightful, though distinctly chilly, bathing-pool. On the 10th we woke to rain, but as we mounted the clouds lifted. Boissonnas' original plan had been to camp on the high plain of Bara (approximately 2350 m.), whence the route to the top is comparatively short and easy. At Litokhoron, however, he was told that the complete absence this year of snow in the vicinity and its distance from the nearest water, made Bara impracticable. We were obliged, therefore, to make for Kalivia (the Huts), 1962 m., used by the English party of 1926 ; and it was there that our tents were pitched for the three following nights. Half-way from the monastery a part of the mule-train and their packs had to be abandoned ; there too, at Prioni (the sawmill), the last running water was left behind. Fortunately the remainder of the mules, hired at Litokhoron and better used to the country, were able to continue with most of the tents and baggage to Kalivia ; each day they were sent down to Prioni for water.

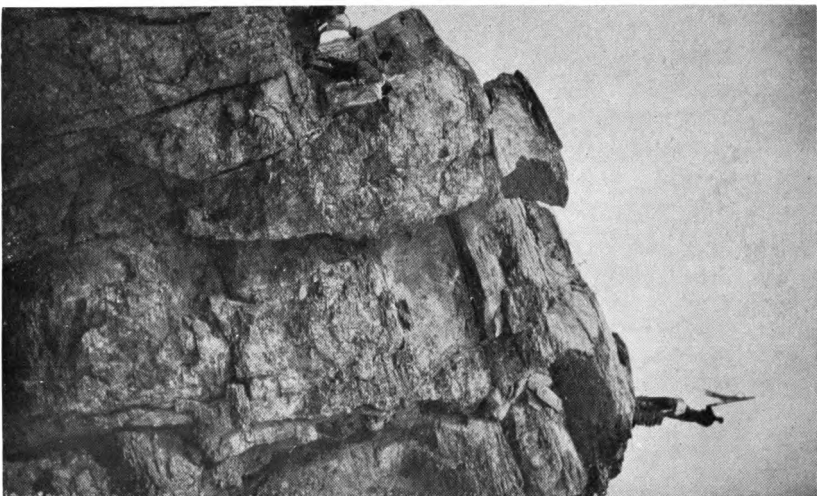
A fairish wind, a damp mist (which I gather to be customary), and the slope of the ground made the pitching of the tents and up-tilting of our stretcher-beds a matter of some discomfort. The temperature at night fell to nearly zero [C.]. Personally on the third night at Kalivia I learnt that pine-branches and the open sky were infinitely preferable to a damp and sagging stretcher, on a damp and dewy ground, under an over-ventilated hut, and slept for the first time in comfort and warmth. But dawn broke 'wondrous fair' over the still waters of the bay,

spirits were excellent, and everyone—or almost everyone—was up betimes on the morning of the 11th.

A careful scrutiny had been made on the boat of Marcel Kurz's *Le Mont Olympe* (see 'A.J.' 34, 173), and some of us hoped to effect the complete traverse of the mountain; but we had also hoped to bivouac at Bara. Camping at Kalivia, a beautiful spot but too far below the main peaks for practical purposes, involved some alteration of the programme, which only allowed two days on the mountain; it was decided to spend the first testing the merits of the party and visiting St. Elias and the Throne of Zeus, and leave the main peak to the following day. A little below the 'lower col' the party divided. The main group made its way right-handed to St. Elias, while a handful of the more ambitious, including Mlle. Evelyn Baron, the most experienced of the Swiss 'gazelles,' moving round the extraordinary circular depression that lies to the N.E. of Stefan, and, taking the main gully to the gap Stribadha, reached the Throne of Zeus (2909 m.) without difficulty about midday. Three of the Evzones with their officer accompanied us as far as the last, a rather giddy-looking, passage. A brief examination of the arête leading down from the summit to Porta led us reluctantly to abandon any hopes of a descent by that route. The photograph gives a good impression of the beginning of the ridge, which inclines more and more steeply as it approaches Porta. Most careful reconnaissance from below would certainly be needed before any such attempt. Moreover, a much less ambitious descent on the N.E. ridge (referred to at the bottom of page 91 of Mr. Elmslie's article¹) gave ample evidence of the thorough rottenness of the rock, which I can best compare to the Aiguilles Rouges to the N. of the Chamonix Valley, and of the need for extreme caution in any descent by *rappel*. We reached Kalivia for a late but welcome tea.

The 12th broke clear and warm; the drifting clouds of yesterday had gone, and everything gave promise of a brilliant day. Moving almost due W. from Kalivia, after a stiff and tedious scramble in the sun up steep paths between the trees, and then over loose scree, Skolion (2905 m.) was only reached for a brief rest at 1 P.M. The view was superb. (The photo shows the 'gazelles' and others, with Kakalos at their head, making for

¹ There is some confusion here. The ridge referred to in *A.J.* 39 is not a ridge on Stefan but a ridge leading up to Mitka from the gap Stribadha.—W. T. E.



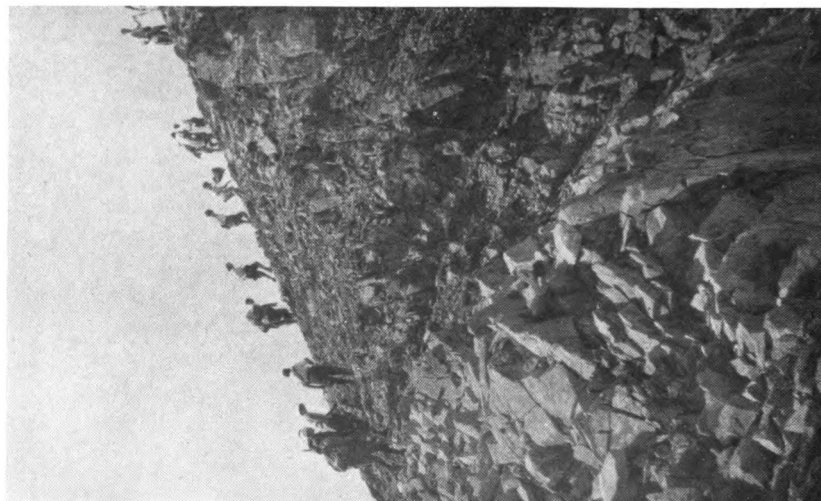
Phot. W. J. Ellison.

THE GREEK FLAG ON THE THRONE
OF ZEUS.



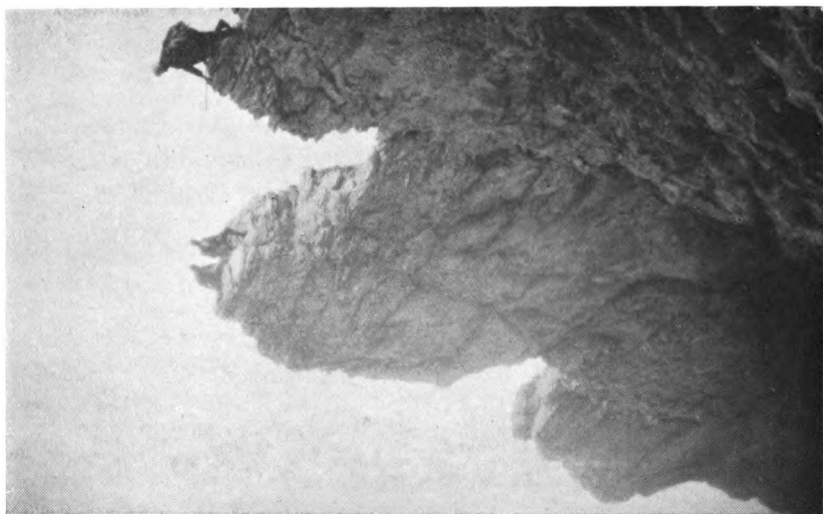
Phot. W. J. Ellison.

AT THE FOOT OF THE THRONE
OF ZEUS.



Phot. W. J. Ellison.

THE ALLIED ASSAULT ON SKOLION.



Phot. Boissonnas, Geneva.

THE UNCLIMBED ARÊTE LEADING
DOWNWARDS FROM THRONE OF
ZEUS TO PORTA.

lunch!) From there to Skala (2866 m.) is straightforward. While the bulk of the party rested, Brut, the cinematograph operator whom Pathé had sent with us, insisted on some *varapping* by the less amateur performers for photographic purposes on the crags of the Tarpeian Rock and the Virgin. Here I had the good fortune to discover half-buried on the crest mid-way between the two points the bottle with the inscription that Boissonnas and Baud-Bovy had left there in the fog in 1913. Here too I discovered to my shame, on seeing the film reproduction, the advantage of cord soles over Tricouni boots on sloping *dalles* and narrow *arêtes*.

Our gymnastics over, we returned with all speed to Skala to fetch those who were anxiously waiting to reach the main summit. We roped² and descended to the deep depression on the crest-line to the S. of the main summits, and in another half-hour were at the top (2917 m.). In all we were twenty-five, including ten of the 'weaker' sex. Captain Demesticas, with three fellow-Greeks, scorning the use of ropes, was (as was only proper) the first to arrive. Boissonnas, indefatigable in spite of his whitened hair, was there with his Swiss 'gazelles,' Baud-Bovy with his son Samuel, Etienne May and his friends from Paris, while the only Englishman of the party had the honour of arriving amid the enthusiasm of her fellow-countrymen with Miss Euphe Nomides, the first Greek woman to set foot on the summit since the days of the Goddesses. Greek, Swiss, French, and English flags were proudly waved, and two important rites accomplished. At the request of the Greeks, M. Boissonnas renamed the point 'Pantheon' instead of its previous inadequate appellation Mitka³ ('the Point'); and in the name of the C.A.F., S.A.C., and Alpine Club formally baptized the newly-formed Greek Alpine Club. Long may it live and flourish!

The remaining rite could only be accomplished after our return to camp in the glory of the sunset tints, with the aid of the champagne that we had, perhaps wisely, omitted to take

² Ropes were more by way of moral support to inexperienced—in some cases totally inexperienced—climbers, than of necessity. For the first time a 35-m. rope that I had carried painfully with me for possible *rappels* justified its existence: it carried nine persons, including Boissonnas—*père, fils et fille*! But the slope is steep and covered with loose and tumbling scree, and the rock treacherous.

³ This name, 'Pantheon,' seems to be rather a pity, reminiscent of Rome and Paris rather than of Homer!—W. T. E.

with us to the top. Speeches, songs, and the rhythmic dancing of the Evzones followed in the flickering light of the camp-fire. Olympus had been taken by storm, without slip or incident to mar the success of the undertaking.

'Rosy-fingered dawn' peering forth behind Mt. Athos over the bay of Salonika and casting her first shafts of radiance on the white pinnacles behind us, called us back from romance to the crude facts of our programme. It was hard to leave.

As we reached Litokhoron that evening the rain fell. The Gods had truly been good to us! A walk through the Valley of Tempe, with a bathe in the Peneius; a visit to the famous monasteries of the Meteors; a most hospitable reception on our return to Athens by the three Greek Clubs that throughout had treated us so well; and once more the *Patris II* and our respective homes, with a sense of real gratitude to the organizers of the expedition and the Greek Government that had helped so much to make it a success.

Somewhat vaguely the expedition had among its objects the investigation of the region of Olympus with a view to *sanatoria* and ski. Since these mean roads, hotels, and the other amenities of civilized existence, all lovers of the mountain will rejoice to know that in the event these objects were almost entirely forgotten!

OFF DAYS ON AN EMPIRE TOUR.

BY L. C. M. S. AMERY.

THE following extracts from my diary, covering a few days in the South African Drakensberg round Mt. aux Sources, and in the New Zealand Alps, may possibly interest members of the Club. For mountain beauty entirely of its own kind, both of form and colour, as well as for the scope it offers to the rock climber, the Drakensberg deserves far more attention than it has yet received, and is well worth the voyage to South Africa for its own sake. Nor do I know a more delightful mountain centre than the comfortable and cheery little mountain hostel at Gudu. As for the New Zealand Alps, their fame is well known to the mountaineering world. All they need is more huts and more trained guides to open up an unrivalled field both for climbing and for Alpine ski-ing, summer and winter. Meanwhile the Hermitage, under Mt. Cook, on the E. of the main range, and the Glacier Hotel at Waiho at the

foot of the wonderful Franz Josef Glacier, on the W., afford easy and comfortable starting-points for the region which has already been opened up and equipped with some huts.

The Drakensberg.

August 27. Woke up at Bergville to get a distant glimpse of the Drakensberg all covered in snow. At the station we found General Wylie, whom I first knew as commanding the Durban Light Infantry at Estcourt in '99, and with him two mountaineers, Botha Reid, son-in-law of the General and Registrar of the High Court, and Kingdon, a schoolmaster. Drove the 29 miles to the hostel at Gudu in the National Park. The views on the road of the 70-mile length of the Berg from Cathkin to Mt. aux Sources were magnificent, the snow picking out all the contours remarkably well. There was much other attractive landscape on the way, and yellow wattle and pink peach blossom, with lambs skipping round on green fields, made a pleasant foreground to the snows behind. About noon we fetched up at the hostel, a delightful little place consisting of a main building and stone 'rondavels' scattered round and embowered in flowering mimosa trees, with the great amphitheatre of Mt. aux Sources behind. After lunch we walked up about 2000 ft. to a mountain called the Lion and got some steepish scrambling before we reached the main ridge and walked along. I tried from there to identify the gully down which I came twenty-five years ago, and was able to narrow down the possibilities to two or three. Apart from Mt. aux Sources, the other mountains round the hostel, as well as the clumps of native forest, make the whole setting very beautiful.

August 28. Off about nine o'clock in the direction of Mt. Broome, beginning by ascending the steepish nose of one of the long spurs that are so typical here, and then walked along the ridge over turf and among scattered protea trees. We halted for lunch just above the saddle below Broome, and scarcely had we done so when a bitterly cold north-westerly wind sprang up. However, we managed to have a good lunch and then scrambled up Broome, getting to the top soon after one. From there we got a splendid view of the whole range down to Cathkin. From the climbing point of view, by far the best part of the range is the ridge running out to Cathedral Peak, a whole series of teeth and spires known as the Rockery Ridge, a great many of them, I fancy, frankly impossible. From Broome we walked some miles all over the top of the Gudu, which on the hostel side comes down in immense cliffs of yellow and pink, rather like the Dolomites above Pordoi, and eventually came to some cascades and delightful pools and, by craning forward, a view of the 200-ft. Gudu waterfall, where the streamlet falls into a pool surrounded by trees. From there we pushed on some distance until we came to the Gudu Gorge, down which we scrambled.

August 29. Started about seven for the Sentinel. A beautiful ride up the valley, crossing wooded kloofs at one or two places, with streams dripping in veils over the rocks. At Tiger Kloof there was a large and inquisitive family of baboons on the rocks above. The colour of the woods was picked out by brilliant bottle brush trees. Eventually rising by very well graded curves, we crossed the main ridge down from the Sentinel at the Gudu Pass and looked over into the Free State. Most of the valleys and slopes a wonderful copper-coloured russet, with here and there patches of bright green after burning. Carried on on the Free State side of the ridge, part of the way through fairly deep snow, and had tea at the Gap, where we were joined by Botha Reid and Kingdon. Presently the path climbed up by steep zigzags to right under the Sentinel. Following round under the Sentinel past the top of Sentinel Gorge and under an easy gully which leads to the top of the main mountain, we reached the cave, where we had lunch, and then proceeded to attack the Sentinel. There was about 50 or 60 ft. of real climbing at the beginning, a short scramble under an overhang and a chimney which lacked holds in the lower part, so that I was glad of a shoulder from Botha Reid. After that easy walking and scrambling up heather-grown slopes partly under snow, and then another bit of actual climbing, easy but exposed, and so to the broad sloping summit. (Height 10,700 ft.; height of peak from path about 800 ft.) The view was glorious: Northern Natal below, and to one side the interminable plains of the Free State, with the Harrismith Platrand standing up quite close. In front of us and below us was the summit-plateau of Mt. aux Sources rising gradually towards the summit itself, 11,200 ft. Seen from there, the Eastern Buttress with Devil's Tooth and Inner Buttress stand out from a more or less straight front, and the little peak which I climbed on the skyline in 1902 is beyond these.¹ That being so, it now seems to me pretty certain that the gully I went down by was also beyond the Eastern Buttress and was one leading down either into the Sinyati or the Mweni valley. This would account for its having more snow on it, as it faces more S. We got down just before dark and as the wind began to get up, and had an A1 supper in the cave. The cave is the best I have ever slept in, roomy, well vaulted, with a flat, sandy floor, fire in one corner, a broad space covered with hay and plenty of blankets filling one side and an alcove in another corner for ladies. We had mutton and duck stew, and then retired in comfort to our blankets. Unfortunately the wind soon got up and a terrific storm raged all night. A large sheet of tin roofing which lay outside in the gully, originally intended to supplement the 6-ft. stone wall which filled in the mouth of the cave, danced up and down the gully all night with a terrific clattering, and nobody dared go out to deal with it.

¹ I believe this has now been christened Mt. Amery.

August 30. Our plan had been to spend this day exploring the summit of the mountain and if possible going down my gully, but the storm made it quite impossible to do anything, and the only question was whether we should spend a day in the cave and hope for better luck, or go down. I decided for the descent, and we cleared out of the cave and moved off as fast as the gale would let us from under the immediate cliffs of Mt. aux Sources. This was an unpleasant passage, as the wind was blowing rocks down from above every now and again. At one moment a terrific gust forced me to check myself on my ice-axe, and that very moment a large rock whizzed down a yard or so in front of me, and a smaller one, quite sufficient to crack my skull, hit my rucksack and cut right through it. When we came to the Sentinel Gorge and other gaps on the ridge it was too dangerous to try and go on the path for fear of getting blown right over, and the only thing was to cut down the slope somewhere below. So we fought our way down for some hours, a very queer experience. Most of the time we were walking at every conceivable angle except the vertical.

August 31. Went up after breakfast to the Tugela Gorge and Tunnel. A lovely ride, the colouring of the valley particularly fascinating. Above, great peaks against the blue, then broad banded cliffs of cream and yellow and red, and then the lower slopes alternately bright green and russet, with the deep blue-green of the yellow wood forest in the kloofs. There were plenty of baboons sitting on the tree-tops eating berries and barking at us, or making off over precipitous rocks with amazing skill. The actual junction of two valleys at the Tunnel is a wonderful spot, with views up the Eastern Buttress, etc., one way, the Sentinel the other, and the main wall between, and lovely bathing pools everywhere. For colour and landscape, if not for climbing, this side of the Berg is almost unequalled in beauty. I imagine the Upper Sinyati and Mweni valleys must be fully as beautiful. As for climbing, I am not sure that there is so very much in between the easy and the quite impossible, but only a month or two of climbing would prove this.

Crossing the New Zealand Alps.

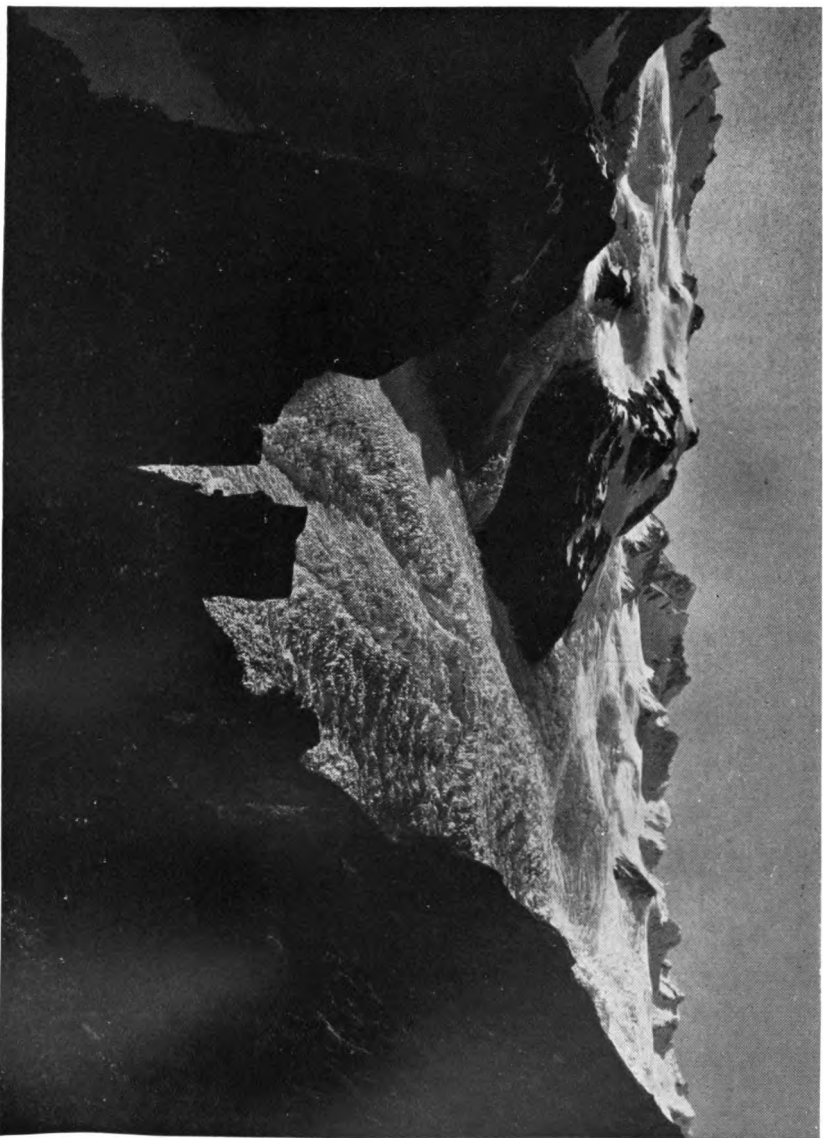
December 4. Hermitage. Had some talk after breakfast with Harper and came to the conclusion that the best thing was to go first to the King Hut and have a good look at Mt. Cook from Glacier Dome, leaving other plans open until we saw whether Cook was possible. Accordingly, immediately after lunch we proceeded, Harper and his active daughter Rosamond, Peter Graham and his nephew Dave, and one or two others, including two Press photographers, to the Ball Hut, about four hours' rather dull going along the moraine end of the Tasman Glacier. From the hut one begins to have quite a fine view of the upper part of the Tasman Glacier and Mt. Malte Brun opposite.

December 5. Got away before six and went up the glacier to the foot of the Haast Ridge and climbed up this to the King Memorial Hut. Pushed on to Glacier Dome, from which we had a most magnificent view of Cook and Tasman before us, with Haidinger, Douglas, Minarets, Elie de Beaumont away to the right, and, still farther round, Darwin and Malte Brun. The only thing comparable with the view, to my mind, is that from Pizzo Bianco facing Monte Rosa. I am not sure that Mt. Cook and Tasman together do not beat Monte Rosa; on the other hand, there is nothing in the flat Tasman valley to compare with the view back from Pizzo Bianco down to the Italian lakes. We spent some time looking at the route up Mt. Cook and decided that it would go quite well, four fine days having sufficiently cleaned the upper rocks and settled the snow on the Linda Glacier. So we decided that Peter was to kick steps as far as he could the next afternoon, I taking a rest, as I had suffered a bit from cramp in my legs on the way up. Our idea was to start about midnight with the help of a good moon. However, before we got back to the King Hut the weather had changed; heavy clouds brought rain and sleet, which lasted most of the next forty hours. We had a crowded and not too comfortable but cheery evening in the King Hut.

December 6. Deluges of rain and sleet and snow all the morning, but about noon we decided that we had better get down in any case to the Ball Hut, Cook now being out of the question within the time available. So in drenching rain and high wind Peter, the Harpers, and myself scrambled down, followed some hours later by Dave and Vic Williams.

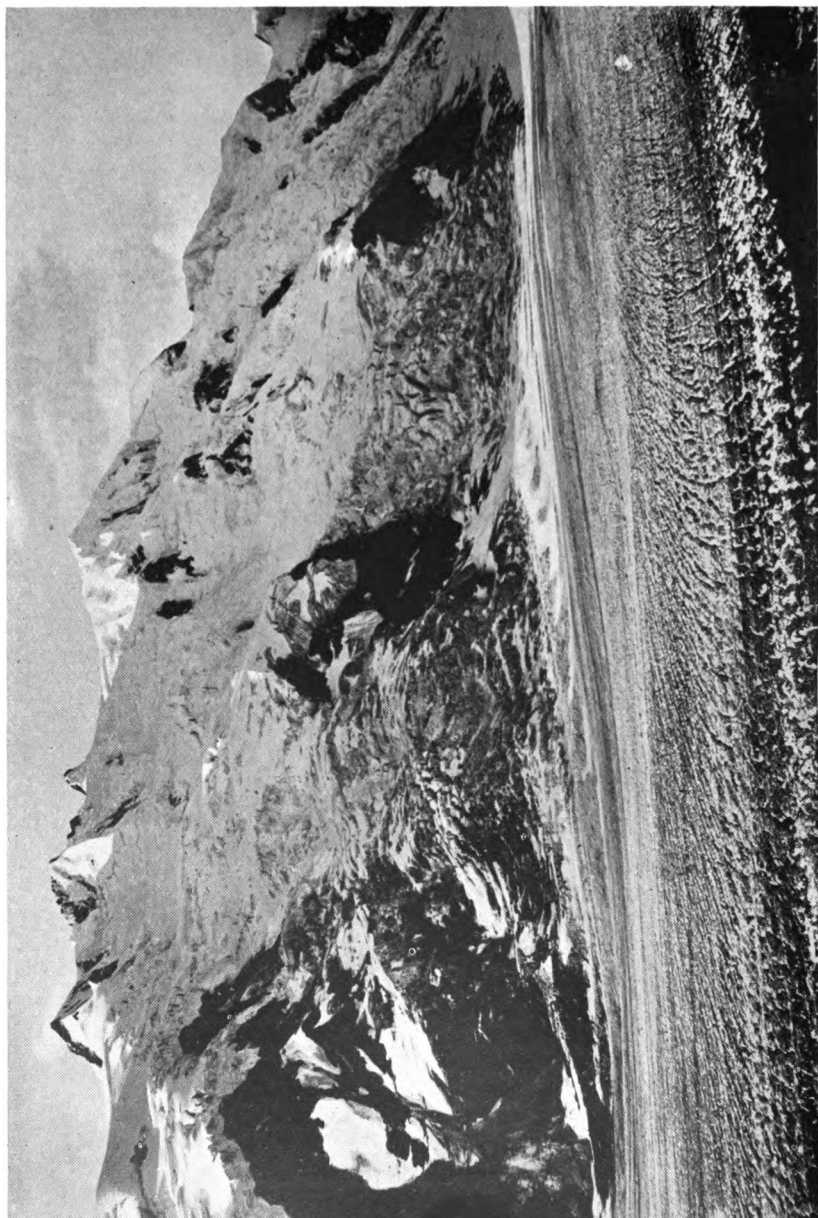
December 7. The day opened wet, but about eleven it began to clear and we decided to go up to the Malte Brun. The position of the hut is extraordinarily fine—a wonderful view over the whole range from Cook up to the head of the Tasman.

December 8. Got away about six with Miss Feiling and Alf Brustad on skis, and in a steady three hours' plodding reached the top of the Lendenfeld Pass and got a fine view of the peaks on the other side. We had started with some idea of scrambling up the Hochstetter Dome, but its sides were crusted, which meant side-slipping down, so we decided to run straight down again. There was enough new snow on the old to make the running very pleasant, though not too fast, and the run itself was an easy one on which one could let oneself go. I stopped below the Malte Brun Hut and basked for some time in the sun, while the guides went across the glacier to kick steps up the Minarets in preparation for the morrow's traverse. Altogether a day of wonderful sunshine, views, and laziness. Some time after going to bed I heard a considerable din. Apparently a kea had walked in through the open door and dragged one of Harper's boots out from under the stove across the floor and got it some way along the terrace in readiness to throw it down the 400-ft. snow slope. Harper was waked up by the noise just



N.Z. Government Photo.

UPPER PART OF FRANZ JOSEF GLACIER
from Defiance Hut.
(Minarets in centre background.)



Phot. W. J. Kennedy.

MINARETS, 10,058 FT., from MALTE BRUN hut.
Tasman Glacier in foreground.

in time and retrieved his boot. When he shut the door and got into bed again he heard a low chuckle and at once knew that the kea had something up his sleeve, so he went out again and found that the kea had still got the leather instep supports without which Harper cannot walk. Fancy a whole expedition being held up by the deliberate mischief of an old parrot! At the Defiance Hut next night one of them tried to get my hat through the half-open window and was only just stopped by Peter.

December 9. Up about 1.30 A.M., a cloudless night and all the mountains flooded in a glorious full moon. Got away at 2.30, and although the moon was by then already behind the Minarets the diffused light was quite sufficient for all our purposes. Plodded up steadily for some 2000 ft. in the steps kicked by Peter, and much admired his judgment in picking a route through the broken and often avalanchy slope, one schrund requiring particularly skilful negotiation. After that the going was decidedly slow, the snow being crusty, though hardly ever enough to hold one, and it was not until about 10.30 that we reached the actual summit ridge just to the left of the Lower Minaret. Here Peter had hoped to find a way down, but the lie of the snow had changed considerably since last year when he had looked at it, and we concluded that it was impossible, or at any rate would take us far too long. Certainly it was desperately steep and something like 2000 ft. or more down to the glacier with tremendous schrunds below. Leaving the problem unsettled for the moment, we went on to climb the main peak of the Minarets, first crossing a rounded dome of snow and then climbing a very sharp conical peak of hard ice curiously nubbly like barley sugar. The top was much too pointed to stand on, not to speak of its being slightly corniced, but we stood round it and patted it with our hands and then descended (about 11.30 A.M.) and traversed along the summit of the ridge for some distance past De La Beche, where we had lunch on some rocks at the edge, while Peter reconnoitred and began cutting steps down a very steep but straight slope of hard frozen snow leading to the glacier just to the left of Graham's Saddle. After lunch we proceeded down this, Dave leading and cutting further steps, taking about one hour to get down some 700 ft., after which the going was easy, and we crossed Graham's Saddle about 2.30 P.M. Then down the Franz Josef *névé*, which was boiling hot, plodding along—it seemed endless (how I sighed for my skis!)—on soft snow until we reached the site of the old Almer Hut, just above which we rested and brewed some tea. Then down some snow and a ridge of slippery tussock grass to the glacier. It was now getting on for seven, the glacier was broken and tricky, and a close question whether we should be able to get down to the Defiance Hut before dark or run the risk of being benighted on the glacier. Peter rushed ahead at a terrific pace and with remarkable skill in finding his way, the rest of us leaping and running behind as fast as we could over crazy knife-

edges of rotten granular ice and soft snow bridges. However, we got opposite the Defiance before it was really too dark and struck the hut soon after nine, having gone nearly nineteen hours. We found there a couple of guides sent up from Waiho, who lighted a flare to let Waiho know, and had also prepared a good supper. So to bed and slept very comfortably, not feeling really done up. Undoubtedly, though the climbs are long, the fact that the maximum height was only just over 10,000 ft. makes a difference. I was much more tired on the Bernina after a week's training last year.

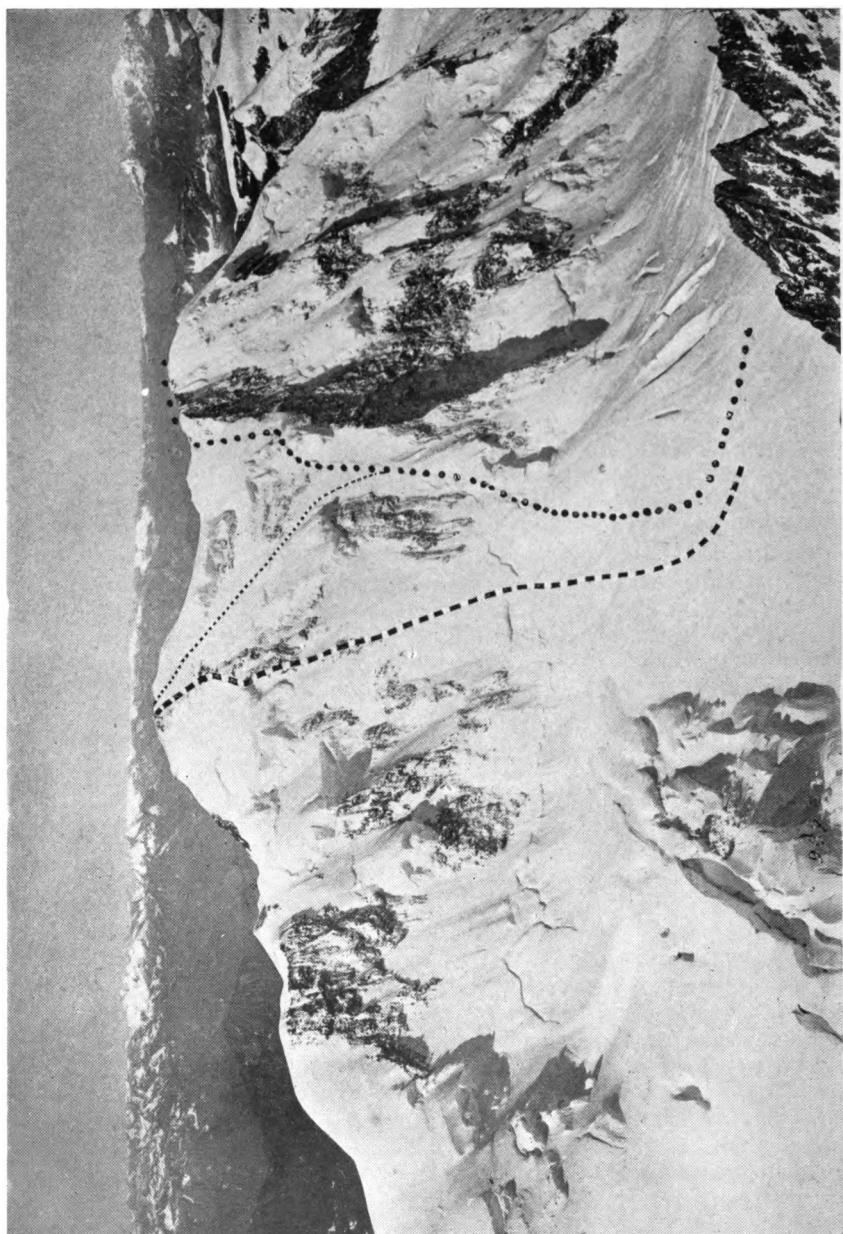
December 10. Got up after eight and walked with Harper along the edge of the moraine to where the Unser Fritz waterfall comes down 1200 ft. and there bathed in a natural armchair of rock, with lovely cold water sluicing over one's shoulders. It was so good that when I had got out and got dried in the sun I had to go and have another and very nearly a third. Then breakfast, followed by a scramble up 1000 ft. or so through bush to the 'Garden' full of Mt. Cook lilies, oriclias, white fennel, etc., and a few buttercups, otherwise no coloured flowers, and got a good view of the whole of our route down the day before. Then down to lunch, and so across the glacier and up through the bush path down to Waiho, a wonderful walk through natural fernery, wild fuchsia trees, 'rata' unfortunately not yet in blossom, and alongside us the great white mass of the glacier, which ends most beautifully and neatly, much better than any glacier I know.

GRANDE CASSE—GRAND MOTTE TRAVERSE.

M. HENRI METTRIER kindly draws attention to an unfortunate error in the obituary notice of the late Maximin Gaspard, 'A.J.' 39, 308. The [above] expedition was repeated, August 8, 1901—three weeks after the Maximin Gaspard party—by M. Mettrier, with the guides Séraphin and Joseph Gromier, as related in *Revue Alpine*, 1902, pp. 48–50.

A short note on the history of the startling ridge connecting the Grande Casse with the Grande Motte may be of interest. The 'Grande Casse' portion of it, or E. arête, is the only difficulty; the W. arête of the Grande Motte is more the broken edge of a face than an arête. On September 23, 1900, Signor A. Ferrari, with E. Sibille and P. Damé, from a chalet between Entre-deux-Eaux and the Col de la Leisse, climbed the Grande Motte (4 hrs. 50 mins.), descended its rocky W. arête to the 'Col de Rosolin,'¹ the lowest depression between the two mountains (1 hr. 20 mins.), then mounted the E. arête of the Grande Casse, keeping throughout almost entirely

¹ Col de Pramoy of the French, 1 : 50,000, map; de Prémou of Gaillard, 3320m.; or Col de la Grande Motte.



Phot. Wehrli.

N.E. FACE OF LYSKAMM.

(On left, 1890 route; on right, 1927 route.)
In centre is intended "Burgener" route.

on its S. slope—the account is not very clear—and reached the summit in 5 hrs. 15 mins. more ('R.M.', 1900, p. 390).

On July 19, 1901, Messrs. H. J. Mothersill and A. M. Bartleet, with Maximin Gaspard and Adolf and Josef Schaller, descended the E. arête of the Grande Casse. Their route appears to differ somewhat from that of Signor Ferrari, since they wisely clung as near as possible to the crest; their descent to near the Col de Pramoy, where they turned down a gully leading to the Val de la Leisse, took nearly 9 hours ('A.J.' 20, 536-7).

This expedition was almost exactly repeated by M. Mettrier as related above. He states in his account that he went along the arête 'about 1 hr.' farther than the British party before also turning down into the Val de la Leisse; he took from the summit of the Grande Casse to easy ground no less than 13½ hrs.

The Blanc family have been at various times on portions of the great jagged E. arête when chamois shooting, and a few parties have had a look at the extremely uninviting prospect before turning back to the summit of the Grande Casse. Signor Ferrari makes no comments on the character of the climb; M. Mettrier is still more emphatic than Mr. Mothersill in condemning the evil character of the ridge, and states that Maximin Gaspard declared that he would prefer to do the Meije traverse twice in one day than renew the climb.

Both Mr. Mothersill and M. Mettrier concur in stating that for many hours it would be impossible to escape from the arête except for comparatively very short distances.

M. Mettrier adds that he has heard of no traverse in either direction since his expedition of August 8, 1901.

E. L. S.

THE N.E. FACE OF THE LYSKAMM.

WITH reference to a note in 'A.J.' 39, 314-5, Monsieur E. R. Blanchet kindly points out that the E. summit of the mountain (4538 m., 14,890 ft.) appears to have been scaled on four (possibly five, see *later*) occasions, direct from the Grenz Glacier, the original 'Norman-Neruda-Klucker' route being more or less adhered to. The parties were as follows:—

August 8, 1925. Herren W. Welzenbach and R. Wolter. They kept to the left, E. of the 'Klucker' rib, stated to be badly iced [when is it *not* iced?] and attained the summit in 3 hrs. 50 mins. from the bergschrund.

July 22, 1927. Herr W. von Kehl, with Fritz Amatter and Fritz Suter, followed the rib throughout till close below the summit when they climbed out to the E.; 5 hrs. 5 mins., including halts, from bergschrund to summit.

August 30, 1927. An unknown party of two, seen by M. Blanchet from the Zumsteinspitze. [I have since ascertained that this party consisted of Herren H. Hoerlin and E. Schneider; their time was 3 hrs. 20 mins. from bergschrund to summit.—E. L. S.]

As there appeared to be some doubt as to the direction of the original 'Klucker' route, a photograph of the face was sent to Christian Klucker, and that great mountaineer replied at once as follows:

'I have marked the "Norman-Neruda" route of August 9, 1890, as accurately as possible. With reference to our 1890 route and to the N.E. face in general, I venture to make a few remarks:

'(1) Our route up the Lyskamm, which I had studied *before* 1890, is the only one, leading from the Grenz Glacier *via* the N.E. face, which is practically safe from ice avalanches. The entire N.E. slope is cleft nearly throughout with overhanging séracs. To the left and right of our rock rib, and, still more on the upper part of the slope where the other route leading to the W. summit is dotted in on the photograph,¹ are these séracs noticeable.

'(2) Zermatt guides had told me that the N.E. face had already been unsuccessfully attempted before 1890. The attempt was made by the Viennese mountaineer, von Kuffner, with Alexander Burgener and the two brothers Kalbermatten of Saas-Balen, and, curiously enough, their line of ascent lay where the other dotted line is shown,¹ but their intention was where the great rock bastion surmounted by an icefall emerges from the slope (at some $\frac{2}{3}$ of the height of the face), to bear to the *left* and make for the E. or highest summit. (I have faintly marked this route on the photograph.) The two Kalbermatten, while cutting steps on the slope in preparation for the attempt, were caught, just a short way above the bergschrund, by a small avalanche and carried, without damage, back again on to the surface of the glacier. This *memento mori* caused Herr von Kuffner to abandon the attempt. I regret that I have not got the date of this attempt.

'(3) I wanted a second good professional for our attempt, but it was difficult (without indiscretion) to obtain one in Zermatt. On August 8 Mr. Norman-Neruda informed me that the Tyrolese, Josef Reinstadler, wished to accompany us on this expedition. Reinstadler suited me, because I knew that he was very good on snow and ice, although less than mediocre on rocks.²

'On the morning of August 9 as we were going up the Grenz Glacier, I had, strangely enough, a warning that our good Tyrolese was taking the Kuffner-Burgener route as the right one. I heard

¹ The 'Blanchet-Mooser' route of 1927 to the W. summit.

² I was for two seasons, 1894 and 1895, with Reinstadler, and this description exactly corresponds with his powers. He perished miserably, throttled by the rope, if nothing worse, on the Col de la Vuignette, Arolla, August 28, 1899, *A.J.* 19, 590.—E. L. S.

behind me, before reaching the height of the contour 3600 m. of the map, Reinstadler saying to Mr. Norman-Neruda: "Klucker should now bear to the right." I flatly refused and proceeded. At the spot where the routes bifurcate we halted for breakfast and our Reinstadler set to work to explain our route. The steep rock-rib did not appeal to him and he kept shaking his head whenever he looked at it!

'In the *Æ.A.Z.* of that year, Mr. Norman-Neruda has inaccurately described the episodes of our ascent: he describes me as leading over the bergschrund up to the rib. This is not correct as Reinstadler did all the step-cutting on the snow slope. Thenceforward, over the entire rib up to the summit, I led and the Tyrolese came up last. It seemed to him preferable that Mr. Norman-Neruda should be in front, as he, Mr. Neruda, unquestionably went better, sack and all, over the steep rib.

(4) 'Before ending, I should like to add the following: the second ascent of our 1890 route was made by the famous British mountaineer Mr. G. W. Young with Josef Knubel.³ Unfortunately, I am ignorant of dates or details. As third ascent of the E. Lyskamm from the Grenz Glacier, I would mention the expedition of Herren W. Welzenbach of Munich and R. Wolter of Berlin, August 8, 1925. Their ⁴ route is parallel (to the left) to ours; it does not touch the rock-rib, and for $\frac{2}{3}$ of the way is exposed to the most imminent danger of ice-avalanches. That is what I call irresponsible record-breaking!

' (Signed) CHRISTIAN KLUCKER.

'FEX, February 12, 1928.'

The route referred to in *R.A.*, 1911, p. 307 (Obituary of the late Auguste Blanc), is a repetition of the (1902) Klucker-Mrs. Roberts-Thomson expedition to the *W. summit* ('*A.J.*' 21, 266-7 and illustrations, *Ibid.* 33, facing 429; communication from Pierre Blanc). Another expedition said to have been led by a Gressoney guide, about 1910-11, appears to be purely visionary.

³ There is some mystery here. Mr. Young writes: 'I have no recollection of this ascent and do not believe that I ever made it.' M. Blanchet declares, on the authority of Knubel, that Mr. Young made the second ascent. M. Marcel Kurz states that Knubel now lays no claim to have been on any part of the N.E. face. Other persons still persist in declaring that they *saw* Mr. Young and Knubel on the face! Can it have been the astral bodies of this unsurpassed party which accomplished the feat? Or did Knubel accompany some other British mountaineer—both in their earthly forms? It would be interesting to know.—*Editor*.

⁴ The route marked in the illustration *A.J.* 39, 314, is, in reality, that of the 1925 German party and *not*, as stated, that of the 'Klucker' party.—*Editor*.

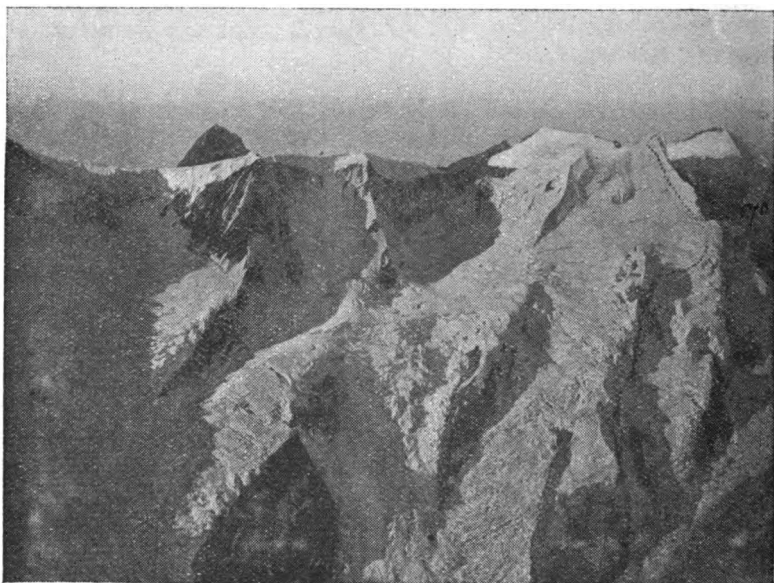
THE OCHS, OR KLEIN FIESCHERHORN.

[This note should be read in conjunction with Captain Farrar's instructive paper under the above title, 'A.J.' 38, 223-30. Mr. Bowyear's descent of the E. face of the mountain, July 16, 1890, the party consisting of the Rev. T. H. Philpott and Mr. H. T. Bowyear, with Christian Almer, senior, and Rudolf Almer, is described in 'A.J.' 15, 309-10. The following letter from Mr. Bowyear supplies additional details.—*Editor* 'A.J.']

'In Captain Farrar's analysis of the Ochsenhorn the following sentence occurs: ". . . though Bowyear with old Almer came down a bit of the E. face . . . and, in their lower route, may have followed Fellenberg's ascent."

'Old Christian Almer was really Philpott's guide and Rudolf was mine; any credit for the expedition belongs to Philpott rather than to me. Christian certainly thought the expedition was new, and it certainly *was* new to all of us; we were quite unaware of Foster's ascent.

'The photograph was taken five years later from the top of the Strahlegghorn, and on it I have marked as well as I can the route



Photo, H. T. Bowyear.

THE FIESCHERHÖRNER FROM THE STRAHLEGGHORN, 1895.

ollowed. We certainly came down the whole of the E. face. I clearly recollect Christian cutting down very steeply but slightly diagonally to the right [S.S.E.] and then slightly diagonally to the left [N.E.], reaching the foot of the steep face near to the base of the N.N.E. ridge. There was a quantity of new snow, and, in the condition it then was, I should certainly have declined to go down that face if any one else but Christian had proposed it. But he knew all there was to know of snow-craft and loved it, and where he and Philpott were willing to go, I was content to follow.

‘My note made at the time, as my custom was, reads “almost straight from the top,” and I think that we must have left the ridge somewhat nearer the top than the point at which Foster seems to have reached it on his ascent. When we reached the foot of the steep part we continued to descend the E. face, leaving point 3570 m. on our left, till we reached a point where Christian thought that, with the snow in the condition it then was, the glacier might not “go.” I pointed to the rocks on our right and said “Why not try those?” but Christian shook his head and said that the glacier above them threatened falls of ice or snow. Then came the thunder-storm and when it had cleared Christian tried the glacier somewhat to the left of where we had stopped; but after several attempts he said that it was no good. The snow was very bad. We must have been somewhere near to the Ochsenjoch, by which, I understand, Fellenberg ascended, but there was at that time a good deal of cloud, and I cannot be sure of the spot.

‘At any rate, Christian returned to the place where we had stopped and said that we must try the rocks. This we did and descended rapidly and without much difficulty, so far as I can remember after a lapse of 38 years. No ice or snow fell. We kept as much as possible to the rocks in order to avoid bad snow.

‘We had left the Bergli at 02.50, reached the Fiescherhorn at 08.20, left at 09.00, and got to the top of the Ochsenhorn about 11.15. We must have left about 11.20, as the threatening weather forbade our lingering anywhere. It was about 14.00 when the storm came on, and it must have been nearly or quite 14.45 when we started for the rocks. We reached the Bäregg at 17.45.

‘The upper part of the E. face was so steep that Philpott found it easier to go down backwards for a considerable part of the way.

‘I think that it is clear from what I have said that we came down the whole of the E. face, and, in our lower route, did *not* follow Fellenberg’s line of ascent. When I took the photograph in 1895, Rudolf Almer and I tried to trace our route, and we agreed that it was approximately as shown by my dotted line, and I think it is not far from accurate, for from the time I commenced climbing I have always tried to understand and remember the routes by which my guides led me.

‘HENRY BOWYEAR.’

KNOTS FOR CLIMBERS.

BY C. E. I. WRIGHT AND J. E. MAGOWAN.

FOR a long time past the question of the best knots for climbers' use has been regarded as settled. This may be inferred from the fact that writers on mountaineering are almost unanimous in their opinions. They recommend for the end and middle of the rope and for the join respectively :—

The Bowline and the Fisherman's Noose ;
The Fisherman's Noose ;
The Fisherman's Knot.

This is redolent of Izaak Walton, and might arouse a suspicion that one had been sent by mistake the journal of a very different club. The association of such widely divergent pursuits is hard to understand, unless Samuel Johnson has somewhere defined a climbing-rope and paralleled his famous definition of a fishing-rod.

Now it will be seen that there has been no advance since the Report of the Committee on Equipment in 1892, published in Volume 16 of the *ALPINE JOURNAL*. Rather there has been retrogression, for the Fisherman's Noose has invaded the domain of the Bowline, and fantastic methods of making it tend to supplant the simpler and sounder recommendations of the Report.

Brief as it is, the summary above fairly represents the position at present. For, even though an authority on climbing may mention some other knot, it is in such a diffident way that an impression is left that he has never put it to the test. A few knots so mentioned may be noticed at this stage and dismissed once for all. The Reef Knot is one, but it remains a mystery by what magic it can be used to make an end-noose without undergoing conversion into a slipknot at the first jerk and into a deathtrap at the next. The Double Bowline on the Bight, tempting to make in the position suggested by its name and offering the benefit of a double turn round the waist, loses every merit but some degree of safety, if the two parts of the rope are pulled in opposite directions, and should never be used in the middle of the rope. The Manharness, most delightful of knots to make, provided only that the neatest method be known, and excellent for a steady haul on a rope

which is itself under tension from end to end, may become a slipknot when pulled about by alternate straining and slacking. Now these are just the conditions that occur in climbing, and they exact as the first quality in a good knot that it shall be unaffected by intermittent strain.

The weakness in the knots hitherto recommended lies, in fact, in the middle noose. The Fisherman's Noose is a slipknot in one direction and it might well have been put out of court by such a grave defect, though it is said by optimists, a term necessarily including all climbers, never to be apparent in practice. Yet there seems to have been no serious rival, for the authorities are at one in condemning the Openhand Noose, although it is still in high favour with Swiss guides.

Dissatisfaction with the middle noose was, then, the origin of this inquiry. It seemed as if it ought to be possible with a little ingenuity to discover a reliable noose. But contempt for the Fisherman's Noose soon extended to dislike of the Fisherman's Knot. The prejudice, in face of reason and fact, became in time a conviction, and the inquiry, somewhat widened in scope, was definitely set on foot as an attempt to discover any good knots that might be of use in climbing.

THE END NOOSE.

The search for new knots ended in partial failure in the section, which, though tackled last, must be treated first on account of its importance. The Bowline, backed by its derivatives, could not be ousted from its position as the best noose for the end of the rope. In adaptability and convenience it surpasses the nooses devised for the middle of the rope and described further on, although they rival it in other respects and are quite reliable as end-nooses. The Rover Noose, in particular, is excellent in this position. It is a worthy compeer of the Bowline, quite as reliable and much stronger, and, when once tautened, shows no tendency to work loose.

In the Bowline the tendency to spring loose is usually met by taking some half-hitches round the bight at the waist. An absolute safeguard is the use of an eyed rope, for then there is no loose end to work through the knot. But this device does away with the great merit of the Bowline, the ease and speed with which the rope can be passed round the waist and the noose knotted, fitted and secured almost in a moment. It will be found that this can be done a trifle more quickly by the method given below than by that which is generally

followed merely because it has been slavishly copied from one book on knots to another. The difference consists solely in the direction in which the initial loop is formed, and this is indicated, here and further on, by the terms, screw-wise and counterscrew, which have been preferred to others more ambiguous on the ground that most climbers are familiar with some form of screw. Sailing men, accustomed always to coil a rope right-handed, or with the sun, will probably begin instinctively with the righthand or counterscrew loop. A trial of the method will reveal the distinct advantage that one movement fewer is required, and further, that the movements are peculiarly natural and easy in forming a Bowline at waist-level.

The Bowline (Figure I).

The standing part of the rope, running towards one from the rest of the party, is held in the left hand, and with the right hand a small bight is drawn out to the right between the thumb and fingers of the left hand. The bight is, at the same time, twisted upwards and over towards one with a counterscrew movement of the right hand and is formed into a righthand loop. The end must next be passed under the left shoulder round the waist and down through the loop. One movement of the right hand now suffices to bring the end round the standing part of the rope and up through the loop.

Those who care to splice an eye, a span or more long, on their rope can make the **Bowline on an Eyed Rope** in the same way, but after being passed through the loop, the eye must be drawn well down, the right hand is then passed through the eye, the bight of the noose grasped and drawn back through the eye, bringing the knot with it. The eye now encircles the rope above the loop and will slip into its place, if the noose be drawn out and stretched. Perfect security is given by this Bowline, but only with the sacrifice of a very great convenience, for it cannot be made directly round the waist, unless the climber himself is able and willing to pass through the eye of a rope.

The adoption of the counterscrew twist in beginning the Bowline may appear at first glance to be only a trifling departure from the usual practice. But it must not be despised and ought to be mastered at once, for not only the modifications of the Bowline, but other knots to be described afterwards are begun with the same loop. This makes for uniformity and simplicity, and has the further very great advantage that the knots are made right-handed. Moreover,



I. BOWLINE.



II. DOUBLE BOWLINE.



III. OPENHAND NOOSE.



IV. DOUBLE-KNOTTED BOWLINE.



V. BOWLINE AND COIL.

in the Bowlines it suits the lay of the rope, closes the knot more firmly, and controls the end better, than if the knot were begun with the reverse loop.

It is bad practice to make the common Bowline and leave the end hanging, for the spring of the rope may loosen the knot and the end work out. The end should be twisted in a few turns round the bight of the noose at the righthand side, or secured with some half-hitches. The latter have always been used by climbers, but the knot is much better, if they are preceded by a few turns in the same direction. The turns should be made to suit the lay of the rope, and with the usual lay they must be made upwards inside the rope at the waist (Figures I and IV). So made, they tend to keep the knot closed, as it lies in a better form. If, on the other hand, the Bowline be begun with a loop in the opposite sense, made with a screw-wise twist of the hand, the turns tend to keep the knot open. Thus in security, as well as in facility, there is a great gain in beginning the Bowline with a counterscrew loop.

Of the derivatives of the Bowline, which have now to be considered, the first and simplest is begun with a double loop, so as to form a double knot. The double turn seems to grip the end more tightly and to ease the strain on the rope at its entry into the knot. Whatever the reason, this slight modification, which adds only one second to the time required to make the knot, increases its strength out of all proportion to the extra time and manipulation. So much so that, where a single Bowline will serve the purpose, the common Bowline should always be replaced by the double-knotted form.

The Double-Knotted Bowline (Figure IV).

Begin by making a counterscrew loop just as in the Bowline. Take up a small bight in the rope just beyond the loop and turn it back in the same sense to form a second loop, which must be laid on the first. Pass the end down through the double loop, round over the rope and up through the double loop again.

Secure the end with a few turns and a couple of half-hitches made upwards inside the rope at the waist.

Another very strong form of single Bowline can be made by closing the common Bowline with the Waist-Rope Hitch, which is described later. The initial loop is made as before, the end passed to the left round the waist, and rove through the loop in a Waist-Rope Hitch instead of the usual knot. It makes a strong noose, included later in the table of tests

as the **Bowline with Waist-Rope Hitch**, and affords a fairly good way of dealing with the end, which may be left hanging free but not too short.

The **Double Bowline** (Figure II) affords another good way of making the end secure, but it is not a strong noose. It is equivalent to the Double Bowline on the Bight, but is made in quite a different way to enable it to be formed round the waist. A single Bowline is first made; the end is left long and passed back to the right round the waist to follow the lead of the noose already made; it is then threaded through the knot beside its lead and left to hang.

The Bowline round the waist is all the more comfortable for being double, as in the last knot, and were it still thicker, the pressure on the ribs might be greatly eased in a severe fall. In the next, the Bowline and Coil, it can either be made double, or, just as easily, several turns can be taken up and caught securely in the knot. This is probably the most convenient method of carrying surplus rope and enables an end-man to reduce an overlong rope by twenty feet without discomfort. The ease with which the coil can be made and the knot tied illustrates the adaptability of the Bowline, and gives this form of it the preference over any noose in point of convenience.

This application of the Bowline is as interesting as it is useful. With a single Bowline before one's eyes as a guide it would appear almost impossible by such a simple expedient to include and secure in a Bowline knot a coil of rope already wound round the waist.

The Bowline and Coil (Figure V).

Make as many turns round the waist as may be desired, passing the end always to the left, until the rope where it enters the coil and the end where it leaves the coil come close together in front. Take the rope at its entry into the coil in the left hand and with the thumb push a bight down inside the coil. Bring the bight forward under the coil (Stage 1) and press the rope a little to the left to lie across the bight. This forms the same righthand loop as in the simple Bowline, but with the difference that the loop encircles the coil. Just as before pass the end down through the loop (Stage 2), then to the left over the rope and up through the loop. Finish off the end by giving it a few turns round the bight of which it is the continuation and a couple of half-hitches round the coil, passing the end upwards inside the bight or coil.

To make a **Double-Knotted Bowline and Coil** is easy and interesting, but the double knot, though it may be useful when

the coil is thick, has no strengthening effect in this combination. The bight is drawn out under the coil just as in the last knot, but much longer, and is then passed down inside it once more and drawn out underneath. The two turns thus formed round the coil to the right of the bight are loosened and laid down on the bight, with which they form the double loop.

With an eyed rope the advantage of taking up a coil of rope is partly lost, for the turns must be made and the knot finished, before the coil is put round the waist. It has then to be fitted by passing the spare rope round the turns towards and through the knot. The preparation of the noose takes a little more time, but it may be worth while to have the comfort of the double turn with the security given by the eyed rope.

Bowline and Coil on Eyed Rope.

Make a loop on the rope just as in the single Bowline and in the same direction. Pass the eye down through the loop to make the first turn. Bring it on round in the same direction and down through the loop to make another turn, and repeat this until the coil is complete. Draw the coil, bringing the loop with it, through the eye, which settles round the rope and can be drawn down into the knot.

The coil can also be made first and the loop formed by drawing a bight of the rope underneath the coil as in the knots just described.

The Bowlines have now been presented in all their variety, and they are a versatile family. At their best they have only one rival for the end of the rope. The Rover Noose, designed for the middle, and derived, as it was, from an improved Manharness, is still classed in the next section. But it fulfils quite as well, or even better, all the requirements of an end-noose, and must be considered with the best of the Bowlines, before a final choice is made.

With this important addition the series offers the climber who wishes to choose only among the best a noose of unrivalled convenience in the Bowline and Coil and two of great strength in the Rover Noose and the Double-Knotted Bowline.

THE MIDDLE NOOSE.

The noose hitherto accepted as the best for the middle of the rope is called the Fisherman's Noose. In some books on mountaineering it masquerades as the Middleman Noose, a misnomer adopted by devotees for the sake of implying that

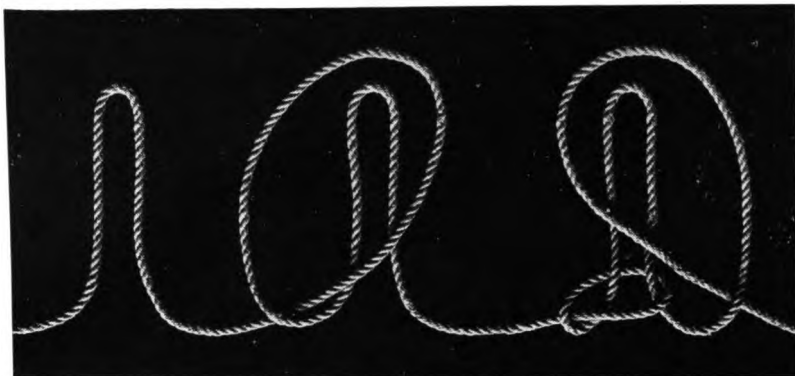
it stands alone. Now, so far from being the only middle noose, if the slight change of term be an improvement, there are in existence a few well-known nooses of this class and others may be invented. Among the latter at any rate, it may be said at once that there are several nearly as faulty and just as unsuitable for the middle of the rope, so that the Fisherman's Noose is by no means without a rival even at its own weight.

None the less it is a great favourite with climbers, and with the detached affection of Izaak Walton they deal with it as though they loved it. Their treatment of it is a remarkable commentary on the scant attention given to methods of making knots. There are eight ways, and may well be more, of making this too well-known knot, and it passes comprehension, by what mischance, for it can hardly have been deliberate choice, some of them have found their way into books on climbing. One distinguished climber gives a method which has no merit but slowness, not even the proverbial sureness. Another adopts the method of a puzzle-knot and offers the simple-minded climber a fisherman's knot as made by a conjurer. Climbing, fishing, conjuring! It sounds like a passage from Alice in Clamberland. Yet a third recommends the same method without the option of an alternative, but complains that it is hard to explain to his readers. Well, naturally. It was devised to prevent an audience from following what was being done, and it requires a little sleight-of-hand, that is as much out of place on rock or glacier as are all other manifestations of juggling and angling.

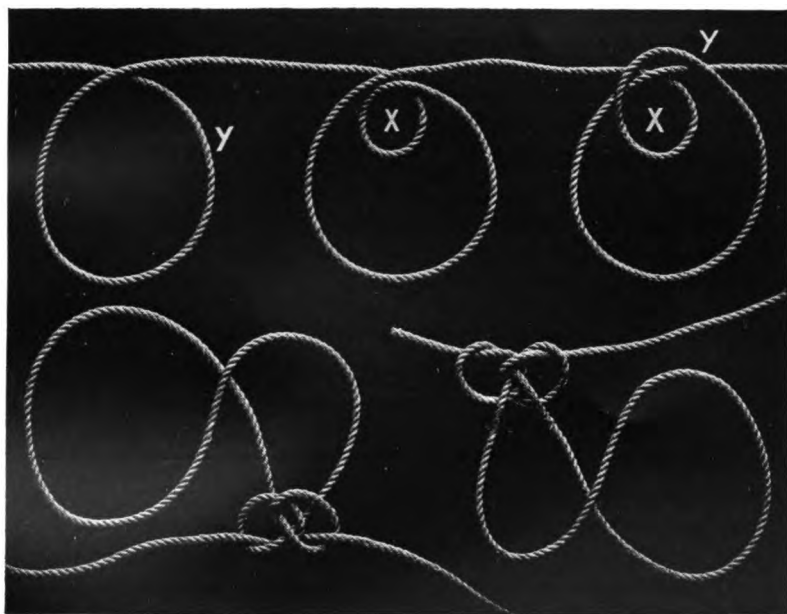
No greater contrast in manipulation could be found than the noose which is now described as the nearest equivalent. It is, perhaps, the best instance in this paper of exceptionally simple and natural movements in handling a rope.

The Half-Hitch Noose (Figure VI).

Take a short bight of the rope in the right hand and hold it pointing upwards, the parts of the rope running to the left and right (Stage 1). Stretch out the left hand and grasp the lefthand rope with the thumb outside pointing along the rope. With a sweeping movement bring the left hand round in front and inwards until it is just in front of the right hand (Stage 2). This movement forms a loose half-hitch. Lay it over the bight. Release it and take the bight in the left hand above the half-hitch. If the right hand be run down the bight, the half-hitch will follow it and settle



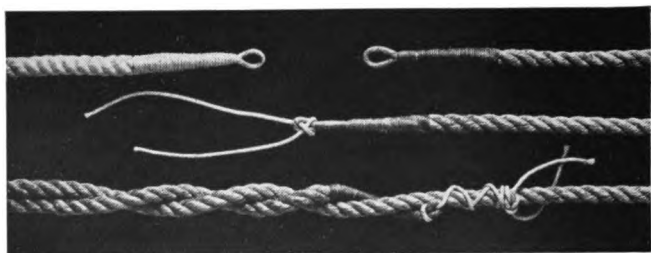
VI. HALF-HITCH NOOSE.



VII. BUTTERFLY NOOSE.



VIII. ROVER NOOSE.



IX. POINTED AND EYED ROPES.



X. TWO-WAY HITCH.

in its place. Now grasp the righthand rope with the thumb outwards, and bring the hand round and inwards to form another half-hitch (Stage 3). Drop it over the bight and let it settle into position just above the former half-hitch. Strain the rope a little and press the two half-hitches close together.

Better if put on with the parts of the noose crossing in the middle of the knot; otherwise they tend to stretch the knot.

The noose is named in order to impress on the memory the method of making it with two half-hitches. The looser it is left the better, for tautening weakens few knots more than this. With the least possible tautening and with the two half-hitches brought closely into contact, it is a satisfactory middle noose and much better than its barbarous prototype.

At first glance it would appear to be an easy task to supply a really good middle noose, for the **Openhand Noose** (Figure III) has not yet been quite discarded from the position and yet it is a good example of defects to be avoided. Made by a simple Overhand Knot on a bight of the rope, it is reliable and will not dislocate or shift its position. These are its merits; now for some defects. In respect of wear it is very severe on the rope. It is a tight knot and may be very difficult to open. Since it is a short as well as hard knot, it has no spring and will not help to ease a sudden jerk by its resilience. The two parts of the rope enter the knot together in the same direction, and consequently, when they are strained apart, either one or the other must take the strain at a very sharp angle. It is the same very serious defect, the lack of a straight entry, which also forbids the use of the stronger, but clumsier, Figure-of-Eight Noose in the middle of the rope.

These points give some idea of the qualities kept in view in the search for a suitable noose. Some of the neatest that were found resembled the Manharness in the ease with which they could be made, a very important quality, but had to be rejected, because they might suffer dislocation, even though it were only in very unlikely conditions. Some that were reliable and yet easy on the rope, two requirements rather hard to reconcile, were somewhat complicated to make. But all of them possessed in a straight entry the one quality that is especially desirable in a middle noose. The ropes should run into the knot without any sudden turn that would constitute a weakness under a violent strain.

Of the two knots about to be described both have this essential property, and the ropes enter them in opposite directions, which is the normal position of the rope when in

use. The Butterfly Noose, though slightly less strong, probably approaches the ideal more closely and is an excellent middle noose. It is naturally a very loose knot and nothing is gained by tightening it. The bights in the knot move on each other with a peculiar hinge-like freedom that makes the knot very easy on the rope. In spite of its looseness it keeps its position, and once it is nearly in its proper form, a severe strain in the rope merely tautens the knot without taking up any of the noose, even when the latter is quite slack. Neither very neat nor good to look upon, its merits will be better appreciated after long acquaintance.

The Butterfly Noose (Figure VII).

Hold the rope with the two hands, the thumbs pointing towards each other and separated by a length of rope more than ample for the waist. Bring the hands together, the right in front, to form a righthand loop, which hold hanging in the left hand with the fingers passing through the loop from behind (Stage 1). With the right hand take the righthand part of the loop at Y fairly close to the neck, and with a movement of the right hand make a small righthand loop or turn round the left fingers at X. Keep it in position by placing the left thumb over it and keep it open with the left fingers (Stage 2). Pass Y up over the rope (Stage 3) and through X from behind. In pulling it through, take it with the right hand and give it a half-twist screw-wise, which will cross the parts of the noose at the base and make it easier to draw the rest of the noose after it. In doing this do not pull the knot taut. It is better to strain the ropes and bring the knot into its proper form before tautening it.

Put the noose on and adjust it to fit by passing the spare through the knot, keeping its form by holding it firmly in the left hand.

The noose should always be put on so that its parts cross each other in the middle of the knot, the position into which they naturally fall.

Tauten the knot but little.

Open by drawing the wings of the butterfly apart, or pulling the noose back through the knot.

In the illustration the finished knot is shown twice. In the figure to the right the knot has been turned over merely to show the inner side. The figure to the left gives its normal appearance.

The Rover Noose is formed by a handsome knot, which should be drawn rather tight, but it bears tightening well and is quite easy on the rope. In pulling it into its final shape, it is well to watch that the rope coming from the climber's right lies always to the right of its lead in every part of the knot.

This means that, wherever two ropes lie parallel in contact in the knot, the rope entering the knot from the right should lie on the righthand side of that running side by side with it. If this precaution be neglected, the knot is still quite reliable, but it is looser and its appearance suffers. With this precaution, which is little trouble, it is much snugger and the two ropes are much more widely separated at their emergence from the knot, a distinct merit in a middle noose.

Both this knot and the last, though designed for the bight of the rope, make reliable end-nooses ; but with neither of them is it possible to take up several turns of rope, as can be done so easily and quickly with the Bowline. The Rover Noose, as already stated, is an excellent end-noose. It is much stronger than the Bowline in the end position and may be much safer than the latter, unless the loose end of the Bowline is carefully secured.

If there were any advantage in having the same noose for all positions on the rope, were it only to save the novice the strain of learning a second knot, the Rover Noose would seem to be the most suitable as an all-round noose.

The Rover Noose (Figure VIII).

Take up the rope with the hands a span apart. With a swing of the right hand make a small righthand loop round the fingers of the left, and, continuing the movement upwards, draw the noose up past the loop ; make the left thumb and fingers pass round the base of the noose and meet in the loop (Stage 1). Pass the noose backwards, release it, and let it hang down behind the left hand (Stage 2). Pass the right hand from the front under the ropes ; grasp the noose and bring it forwards and upwards and through the loop from the front.

The knot is much better if the righthand rope emerges to the right of its lead through the knot, that is, the ropes come out of the knot as far apart as possible. This must be ensured at the beginning by using the left thumb to hold the righthand rope in the proper position against the loop. When this knot is made in an end-noose, it is essential that the lefthand rope is that running to the rest of the party and that the righthand rope is the free end.

The importance of the caution just given cannot be exaggerated. It is explained by the utter lack of symmetry in the knot. In one direction it forms the strongest of all nooses ; in the reverse or righthand direction its strength falls by one-sixth and in this form it is quite unsuitable for the end of the rope.

Even in the reverse direction it is still good in the middle of the rope, but to get the best out of it, it is well before making it to consider a moment from which side the greater strain is likely to come and to work with the rope from that direction in the left hand.

The inequality in the reverse knot is characteristic of middle nooses, but it concerns the climber much less in those, like the Butterfly, that are nearly symmetrical from end to end. The difference in the symmetry of the two knots shows up clearly in their behaviour under breaking tests, in which it is advisable always to measure the extreme load of middle nooses in both directions and to determine once for all at which end they are stronger.

To meet the lack of symmetry it is better for the sake of consistency to make a simple convention with regard to the middle nooses. In making the knots one is supposed to work with the lefthand rope running to the leader, or more accurately, for the case is altered in a descent, in the direction from which strain more frequently comes.

This rule is important, because it ensures that the middle nooses are used at their full strength, while they are still made by the simplest methods ; but it has the complication that, when the noose is passed directly over the shoulders, the knot is found to lie at the righthand side. If the rope is required at the right, the procedure is correct and some untidiness in the knot must be tolerated. The fact is, rather luckily, for it might be just the other way, that both these knots lie much more naturally at the left side when the noose is round the waist. The lefthand rope in the illustrations will then run from the climber's left side towards the leader, as is the usual practice, unless there is a steep downward slope to the left of the party. To bring the knot into this position after it has been made it is necessary either to step over the rope into the noose and pull it upwards into place, or to pass the rope over the head to the left side and draw the noose downwards.

The nuisance of passing the rope across the body seems to be inherent in these nooses, for it can be avoided only by adopting complicated methods of making knots, a much greater inconvenience, or by reversing the direction of the knot by making it on a reversed section of the rope. Oddly enough a bad noose is immune. The explanation of the apparent paradox is that the defect, where it arises, is bound up with that best of good qualities, a straight entry. The ideal noose of this type is necessarily one-sided ; when it is

made by the simplest method, with the leader on the right, and then put on directly, the knot must lie in its neatest form at the left side. These are the conditions of the problem which the Butterfly Noose so nearly satisfies, but a full solution is likely long to elude climbers unpractical enough to take an interest in knots.

Meanwhile, until the ideal is discovered and the Rover Noose perhaps banished to the section to which it more typically belongs, some precautions must be taken. For strength and safety in making the Rover as end-noose it is essential that the lefthand rope leads to the rest of the party ; and for uniformity in making the middle nooses it is better to work with the leader to the left and to pass the rope to the other side before putting on the noose. Even the climber who is quite careless about the life of his rope and the neatness of his knots cannot afford to neglect the warning given above and make an end-noose wrongly. He may, however, regard as niggling the hints which follow about the Rover and the Butterfly as middle nooses. If so, let him ignore them and put the noose on anyhow, confident that with these excellent nooses he will at the worst be in no worse case than with the best of the old knots.

THE WAIST ROPE.

So far as memory serves, only one writer on climbing was found to make any reference to the use of a waist-rope, and in his opinion it was to be condemned as bad practice. Why it should be so was hard to understand, for there seems to be some convenience in two middlemen hitching themselves to the main rope by means of a separate rope round the waist. But a little consideration gave the clue to the mystery. None of the well-known hitches would quite satisfy a climber. He must have a hitch that will stand a strain in either direction. The Two-Way Hitch was designed to meet this requirement and nothing else was found that was both simple and effective.

The Two-Way Hitch is begun exactly like the knot in the Bowline and its principle is the same, but it is a symmetrical knot and takes a strain equally in either direction.

The Two-Way Hitch (Figure X).

With the right hand draw out a bight of the rope and with a counterscrew twist make it into a loop ; pass the cord down through the loop, then towards the right, up over and behind the rope and

up through the loop from below. This movement is just as in the Bowline, and the knot is now half made. Pass the end of the cord on over and round under the lefthand part of the rope and down through the loop. Tauten a little.

Once this knot can be readily made, the step to the next is easy. One great test of a knot is to try how it stands, when one cord is thicker than another. Now, if the Two-Way Hitch is made loosely, a condition in which it is still usually secure, of light cord on rope, and if there is a jerk or violent strain on the rope, while the cord remains slack, the loop in the rope may be pulled out flat and the knot dislocated. The conditions are not likely to occur in climbing, but it is better to be on the safe side. When the knot is half made, a couple of turns are taken round the cross of the loop, the knot is finished as before, and now affords a secure Waist-Rope Hitch.

The Waist-Rope Hitch (Figure XI).

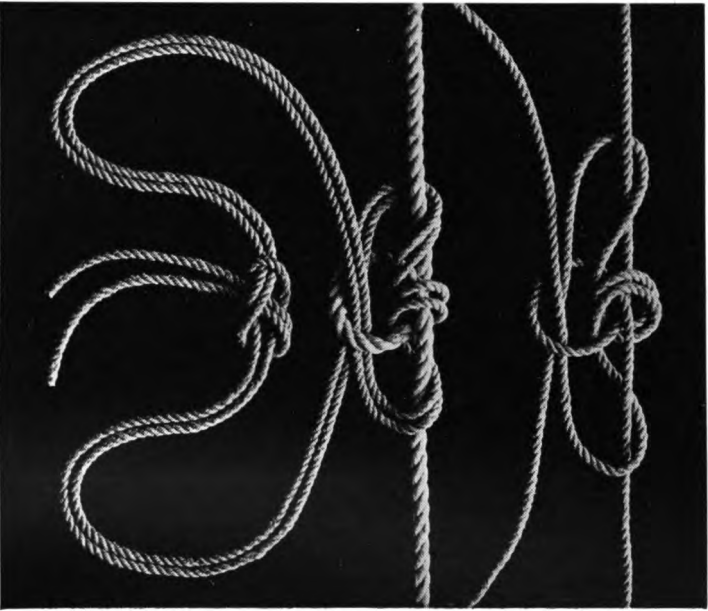
Proceed as in the Two-Way Hitch, but at the half-way stage take two turns with the cord round the cross of the loop to remove the possibility of its being flattened out by tension. Tauten the cord, but it is better not to tauten the loop in the main rope too much.

The waist-rope had better be of thinner rope, two-thirds the girth, and doubled exactly in two so that it ends in a bight. The hitch is made by reeving the bight through the loop on the main rope, one turn round the cross being sufficient, if the waist-rope is double. The rope is now brought to the side preferred without regard to the direction of greatest strain, which is immaterial with a symmetrical knot. The waist-rope is passed round the body in such a way that its parts cross each other in the middle of the hitch, and is closed by fastening the ends to the bight with a sheet bend (Figure XI).

The great strength and reliability of this hitch should remove any objection to the use of a waist-rope. As it is symmetrical and equally good in either direction, it would seem to be stronger on the whole than any of the middle nooses.

THE BEND.

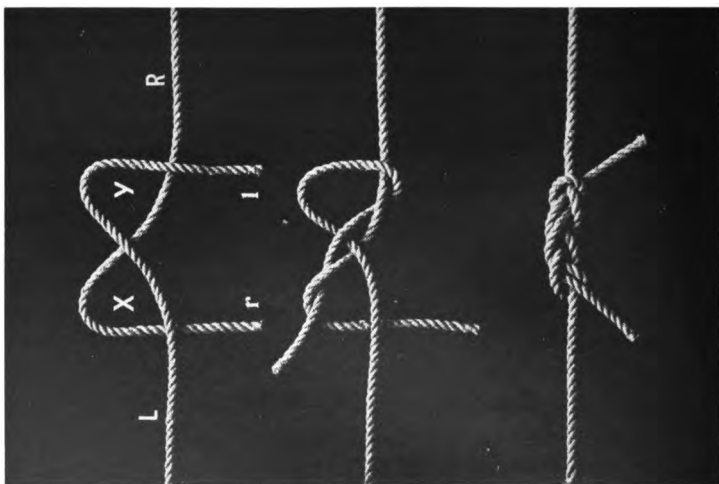
The Fisherman's Knot has long stood alone as a tie for two climbing-ropes. It is used by anglers to join two pieces of gut. On one end of gut an overhand knot is made which



XI. WAIST-ROPE HITCH.



XII. FISHERMAN'S KNOT.



XIII. THE SENNIT KNOT.



XIV. THE REEVER KNOT.

encircles the other piece. The two are then turned round and a knot made on the other loose end to encircle the first piece of gut. This device of reversing the gut at the half-way stage ensures that both knots are made with the same hand, and the knot is in the concordant form, which is slightly stronger. It is the form adopted in the Report of 1892, which recommends the making of two separate righthand knots even when it is used to form a middle noose. Now it is not uninteresting to note that in recent syncopated methods of making this noose it is always the discordant form that arises, consisting of a righthand knot on a lefthand knot, and further, that this weaker form, for a reason which quite escapes its advocates, is slightly the better in a middle noose.

The Fisherman's Knot (Figure XII).

Either of the following methods gives the concordant form and ensures that it is made with the lay :

1. Half-knot method.—Begin with a half-knot just as in the Reef Knot, with the righthand rope behind (Stage 1). The lie of the ends now shows the direction in which each end must be brought on round the other rope in forming the overhand knots.

2. Threading method.—Turn the righthand rope back towards the right, and on its end make a righthand overhand knot. Turn the knot back towards the left and thread the lefthand end through it (Stage 2 of method above). On this end make a righthand knot encircling the other rope (Stage 3 of method above).

Tauten the knots before drawing them together.

In climbing it is the stronger concordant form that should always be used as a join. Though better than the discordant form, it is lumpy and not very neat in appearance, and it is severe on the rope. The last point, however, important as it may be in a middle noose, matters less in this case, for the ends can be cut away when they show signs of wear. It must be well tightened, and is then a hard knot, in which the strain is taken solely by the touching surfaces of two overhand knots. The knot is without any spring or resilience, but none the less it is reliable and effective.

If a knot is to possess resilience, there must be some interlacing of the ropes, which will distribute the strain among the various turns in the knot and spare the rope. This involves a longer knot, but length, unlike thickness, is no disadvantage, provided neatness be not sacrificed.

Of the knots now suggested as suitable for use in climbing,

the first is particularly neat and handsome. If left loose and open, and then strained, it may take a form that is without neatness, though still quite secure. It ought to be thoroughly tautened by pulling on the ends and on the ropes alternately and by kneading it with the fingers, until it is flat and compact. It has then the reliability and much of the neatness of a splice.

In view of suspected defects its behaviour under breaking tests was closely watched. In spite of the high tension it finally withstood, it retained its handsome form to the last and no signs of collapse were apparent when the cord snapped.

The Sennit Knot (Figure XIII).

Take up the ropes with the ends towards each other so that in either hand there is a bight with the end hanging down; bring the right over to the left hand and behind it; then change hands on the bights, overlap them and bring them into the form shown (Stage 1). If the bights have been made small, this arrangement can easily be held in the left hand. With the right hand pass *l* backwards under *R*, through *Y* from the back, over the crossing ropes and through *X* from the back (Stage 2). In the same way pass *r* from the front through *X*, forwards over the cross and from the front through *Y*. Tauten well by pulling on the ropes and the ends alternately and by working the knot with the fingers.

Make sure that either end is passed through both bights from the same side, in one case through both bights from the front, in the other case through both from the back.

To open, if very taut, grasp the ropes and the ends together just outside the knot and compress it a few times. The ends are then easily withdrawn.

The next knot is simpler than the Sennit Knot, and at first trial would appear to be easier to make, but it offers some scope for error.

The Reeve Knot (Figure XIV).

Bring the ends together as in beginning a reef knot, but keep the centre of the half-knot open in the form shown. Note that the ends lie above the ropes (Stage 1). Next give each end a turn round the other rope and bring it back towards the centre and down through the space. At this stage, to avoid the chance of a mistake, which might lead to a reef knot, keep each end pressed into the angle of the opening and well away from its own rope (Stage 2). Now pass each end on through the eye at the other end of the knot to lie beside its own rope.

Tauten by pulling ends and ropes alternately. Opened easily by compression.

Only a short reference need be made here to the rule that knots should be made with the lay of the rope. The joins, like the reef knot, are begun with the righthand rope behind the other for the sake of conforming to the usual lay. Since the strands run screw-wise in the rope, the ropes should lie together counterscrew-wise in the knot. The run of the rope through the knot may be reversed as an experiment by beginning with the left hand behind. The point is well illustrated in the contrast between the two edges of the flattish Sennit Knot, which is made with the lay along the thinner edge, where the strain is greatest. Along this edge the ropes enter and are spirally twisted in such a way that the strands lie in the general direction of the ropes and knot. Along the thicker edge, on the contrary, the ends lie spirally counter to the lay in such a way that the strands run across the knot and are more opened by the slighter strain. In the Bowline, as already explained, the knot holds better for being made with the lay in direct opposition to the practice of the authorities. On the whole, however, the principle is of little account in climbing, for it must be violated, when, as in the middle nooses, it clashes with more important considerations. One eminent authority, in fact, seems tacitly to recognize this. After laying down the law that knots must be tied with the lay, in his illustrations he shows them, either out of facetiousness, or unconsciously for a more obvious reason, made left-handed and consequently always against the lay.

The knots just described have been preferred to others equally strong, because they grip the ends firmly when the rope is slack. The repeated slacking which is inevitable in climbing tries a knot severely, tending to ease the nip on the ends and let them work loose. In this respect the knots are safe, even if the projecting ends be left quite short. Moreover, the ends emerge side by side with the ropes and are less liable to catch in obstacles. For that matter they can be tied in smoothly, if, instead of the usual whipping, they are pointed and finished off with an eye or becket, through which a short piece of string may be rove. This may be a refinement, but there are rare occasions, lassoing, for instance, or throwing a rope with any object, when it might be useful to fasten a light cord to the rope, and that cannot be done neatly and securely, unless there is an eye in the rope.

It should be noted in favour of the pointed and eyed rope that no neater or safer finish can be given to any of the Bowlines than by passing the end as usual in a few turns round the rope at the waist and then lashing the two together by means of a cord rove through the eye (Figure IX).

The small eye or becket used as a neat finish to a pointed rope is quite different from the spliced eye or loop mentioned in connection with the Bowline. The latter, a span long, is awkward, and has for sole advantage the security it gives to the Bowline. The former, no wider than the diameter of the rope, is never in the way, is no hindrance to any use of the rope, and enables a cord to be attached to it securely and very quickly.

CONCLUSION.

Now that the methods of making the new knots have been given, climbers who have borne the tedious descriptions with patience will probably be glad to have the comments that are scattered through the notes brought together in a summary :

- I. The Double-Knotted Bowline and the Rover Noose, of nearly equal merit, are the best nooses for the end of the rope. The Bowline and Coil, though weaker, provides the most useful and adaptable end-noose.
- II. If there is any gain in having the same noose for end and middle of rope, the Rover Noose is the best all-round noose.
- III. In the middle of the rope the Butterfly Noose surpasses the Rover Noose. The Half-Hitch Noose, though effective, is much inferior to either.
- IV. The use of a waist-rope is justifiable with a strong and reliable hitch like the Waist-Rope Hitch.
- V. For bending two ropes together the Sennit Knot is neater than the Reeve Knot, which is otherwise equally strong and good. The Fisherman's Knot is also reliable and only slightly weaker.

This summary may be put more practically in a series of hints, which will enable the climber to suit his own aims and to confine his study of knots to a small selection. Thus novices who wish to learn one knot and no more will find their heart's desire in the Rover Noose. Expert climbers who wish to go further, but take little interest in the vagaries of

knots, who like the Bouvier, but object to the bottle, would do well to master and apply the Bowline and Coil for the end of the rope and the Butterfly Noose for the middle. Others who value strength in a knot and wish their rope to have the greatest margin of safety on difficult and exposed routes have their requirements met by the Double-Knotted Bowline or the Rover Noose for the end of the rope and the Waist-Rope Hitch for the middle.

For the sake of referring briefly to the new knots it was inevitable that they should be given distinctive names. In making the selection, which proved a critical and troublesome matter, regard was had to the purpose or appearance of the knot, so that the name might be suggestive and easily remembered. Usually the difficulty was to coin an appropriate name without sacrificing simplicity. Thus Rover Noose is simple in form, but is cumbered with the far-fetched implication that it will go anywhere on the rope. The term, Bowline and Coil, is briefly descriptive of this useful adaptation of the Bowline. Two-Way Hitch and Waist-Rope Hitch convey the purpose of the knot. The Reeve Knot is named rather at random, because there is some reeving in the making of it and because it has some analogy with the reef knot. The Sennit Knot is very close to the flat plaited rope called sennit. The Butterfly Noose is so styled on the basis of a more or less fanciful resemblance imagined in the form of the knot.

Running through this paper there will have been traced an heretical idea that climbing is worthy of its own knots. It is a short step to the belief that knots specially designed for use in climbing must inevitably surpass casual adoptions from tamer and duller pursuits. But, none the less, it must not be thought that the new knots have been put forward without due consideration. The merits of old and new have been weighed and the preference given to those that were fairly simple to make, neat in appearance, easy on the rope and reliable under intermittent strain.

To follow out the methods of the Report in making a selection the new knots were submitted to a breaking test, which had to be conducted on a small scale with cord instead of rope. The cord selected was an excellent line of Italian hemp, laid up like rope and resembling it closely in every particular. It turned out to be exceptionally strong, for with a diameter of only $\frac{3}{16}$ of an inch its average breaking strain in fourteen tests was 21 lb. 1·3 oz.

As a check on the results some of the older knots were included, and they all showed much higher percentages than in the Report. In one case, the Openhand Noose, the difference is so great that it may be questioned whether the same knot was used. In other cases the higher figure may be explained in part by differences in pliability and roughness, which would greatly affect the nip of the knot, and in part by the great difference in thickness between cord and rope, which may tell in favour of the former. In any case the discrepancy must be due to some cause which affects all knots in common, and the use of a fine cord need not invalidate the results, since, in all probability, the relative position of the knots is unchanged.

The nooses were all tested as end-nooses, but their proper

STRENGTH OF KNOTS.

Recom- mended.	Use.		Report of 1892.	Percentage Strength.	Percentage Variation.	Breaking Strain.
		Cord		100	4.3	3373
		Joins				
		Reef Knot	53.4	62.8	9.6	2118
		Carrick Bend		63.2	9.4	2134
		Thumb Knot	57.7	69.7	9.4	2351
		Diamond Bend		69.9	1.2	2358
		Fisherman's Knot, Discordant		70.9	7.1	2392
*	J	Fisherman's Knot, Concordant	61.7	81.2	9.5	2741
**	J	Sennit Knot		86.2	10.8	2908
		Unnamed Knot		86.3	5.3	2910
**	J	Reever Knot		86.4	8.9	2914
		Carrick Bend laid up		94.2	8.5	3178
		Nooses				
	E	Double Bowline		72.5	6.3	2445
	E	Fisherman's Noose	65.0	73.6	12.0	2482
	M	Rover Noose, Reverse		76.5	6.8	2580
*	M	Half-Hitch Noose		77.6	11.5	2617
	E	Bowline	72.4	77.8	7.6	2626
	E	Double-Knotted Bowline and Coil		79.1	13.2	2670
**	E	Bowline and Coil		79.5	5.4	2681
		Openhand Noose	64.1	79.6	8.6	2686
**	M	Butterfly Noose		84.9	8.2	2865
	M	Butterfly Noose, Reverse		85.1	6.9	2870
	E	Bowline with Waist-Rope Hitch		87.6	5.6	2956
**	M	Waist-Rope Hitch		89.3	6.5	3013
**	E	Double-Knotted Bowline		92.0	7.3	3103
**	E M	Rover Noose		92.5	5.0	3121

position on the rope is indicated in the table by the letters E and M. The middle nooses were in two cases tested in both directions, and the result on the righthand rope is entered against the reverse knot. A perfectly symmetrical knot like the Waist-Rope Hitch would, of course, not show any difference.

The fourth column of figures gives the average weight which the knot just bore without breaking, measured in tenths of an ounce and based on some seven to thirteen tests in each case. The smaller unit has been adopted instead of the ounce, because the figures as they stand can equally be read as the weight in pounds which the knots would bear, if made on a full-size rope equivalent to the cord. In the second column the breaking weight for each knot is expressed as a percentage of the breaking load of the cord. In the next column is a percentage derived from the range covered by the results for any one knot and giving approximately the possible deviation of a knot from its average strength; the smaller the number the better and more consistent the knot.

As a further test the average time which it takes to make the knots was ascertained to the nearest half-second, and may be of sufficient interest to be recorded here. It was thought that the times might be some guide to the usefulness of the knot, but they were not much help, for they differed less than was expected, and after all, provided a knot holds well, it matters little to a climber whether it takes five seconds more or less to make.

TIME OF MAKING THE KNOTS.

	Secs.		Secs.
Fisherman's Knot . . .	10½	Manharness . . .	6
Sennit Knot . . .	17	Fisherman's Noose . .	8
Reever Knot . . .	13	Half-Hitch Noose . .	8
Carrick Bend laid up . .	91	Rover Noose . . .	7½
		Butterfly Noose . . .	9
Bowline . . .	14		
Double-Knotted Bowline.	15	Two-Way Hitch . . .	11
Bowline and Coil . . .	28	Waist-Rope Hitch . .	16½

The Bowlines, though easy, take an unexpectedly long time, but much of it is spent in securing the end. The middle nooses have still to be adjusted. They differ by little, but all

take more than the six seconds of the Manharness, which was included for the sake of comparison.

The Fisherman's Noose compares favourably with others of its class. But it did not show to advantage at first, for it was made by a novel and ingenious method, recommended in a work on climbing, which took no less than twenty seconds. This seemed so needlessly long in comparison with similar nooses that other methods of making it were devised. Not only were they simpler, but much quicker, taking 8, $8\frac{1}{2}$, 9 and 10 seconds respectively. Thus, although speed cannot be used to discriminate between knots, it is a good test of method. A knot cannot be made quickly, unless the movements required by the method are easy and natural, and the great difference just noted shows that it is well worth while to seek and learn the best way of making even a widely known knot.

In the case of the new knots no pains have been spared to discover the neatest and simplest methods, and climbers who learn and apply them should be safe from the annoyance of having ultimately to discard them for better.

These knots are new in the sense that no earlier record of them has been traced. But it might be rash to claim that they have never been used before. To echo a well-known writer, very old are all knots. Their age was recently brought home to our minds by the discovery of a clove hitch that had been made in the Valley of the Kings three thousand three hundred years ago. In comparison with such antiquity mountaineering is a thing of yesterday, and the knots are new, at least, in their application to climbing. They have been devised to satisfy the exacting requirements of a pursuit in which life might depend on the security of a knot, and they are now left to the judgment of others in the belief that they will not be rejected without a thorough test, and in the hope that the approval of climbers may make amends for the time and labour devoted to the inquiry.

SIMLER'S 'VALLESIAE DESCRIPTIO ET DE ALPIBUS
COMMENTARIUS.'

The History of the De Thou Copy.

By J. MONROE THORINGTON.

THIS is a tale of princes, of statesmen, and of lesser men ; of a book and its wandering.

Now it has been said that explorers are but destined vagrants, but even that is an admission of class distinction. Books are also subject to caste : some shabby and never seen except on the outside shelves of book-stalls ; others, rich in morocco and gilt, pass their time in exclusive libraries. Our story has to do with an aristocratic book, and we shall follow a strange path.

It was not altogether chance that brought François de Foix to the Pyrenees in the summer of 1555. True, he was the Comte de Candale, and Bishop of Aire, in Gascony, but he was also a mathematician and had endowed a chair at the University of Bordeaux. His zeal in this direction led him to attempt the ascent of the Pic du Midi, with the laudable intention of measuring its height, and, although he did not reach the very top, he appears to have risen higher above the sea-level than any other Old World mountaineer of his generation.

Nearly thirty years afterward there came to the south of France a young man, who stopped to take the waters at Eaux-Bonnes, near Pau, then known as the Bains du Béarn. The youth was Jacques-Auguste De Thou, later to achieve fame under Henry IV. through his connexion with the Edict of Nantes. But he was young then, and his stay at the watering-place was rather for pleasure than from necessity.

It chanced, however, that M. de Candale was spending his declining years in the neighbouring Château Castelnau, and invited De Thou to dine with him. Conversation turned at last on the subject of the possible altitude of the Pyrenees, and the old man related to his guests the events of the ascent years before, thrilling them with his narrative of what took place above the clouds. He told them of the lairs of wild goats, of the nests of eagles, of cold and giddiness in the rarefied air, of the lofty point attained through the aid of grapnels and ladders.

De Thou was evidently impressed, for he wrote out the story when he reached home, adding some conclusions of his own that the mountain might contest with Mt. Olympus the distinction


of being the highest in the world. Then, as now, statesmen were often uncertain with figures. Later on De Thou included the adventure in his monumental 'Historia sui Temporis.'

Not long before this, in 1574 to be exact, Josias Simler, a Zürich professor, wrote a little book. It was called 'Vallesiae Descriptio et de Alpibus Commentarius,' and was the first book ever published that dealt solely with the Alps. The description of the Valais was merely a translation into Latin of portions of the great 'Chronik' of Johann Stumpf, an enormous work issued in 1546, containing more than three thousand wood engravings and some of the earliest wood-block maps of Switzerland.

In Simler's commentary on the Alps, for the first time, sound practical advice is given as to the necessary precautions for travel above the snow-line. There are detailed descriptions of many alpine districts, as well as notes on the dangers and difficulties to be met with in the high mountains. Travellers are advised to attach to their feet shoes, resembling horse-shoes, with three sharp spikes to counteract the slipperiness of the ice. Alpine sticks and ropes and guides are recommended, as well as spectacles to protect the eyes, and the wanderer is admonished to keep moving and avoid avalanches.

When De Thou returned home after some years of travel and began to acquire a library, it is not to be wondered at that the remembrance of M. de Candale's scramble inspired him to secure this book.

De Thou soon had the finest library of his time, including in it many volumes from the Grolier collection, so that it rivalled those of Richelieu and Mazarin. He had not one but several copies of each book he felt a particular affection for, ordering them to be printed on the best paper obtainable, expressly for himself. His bindings are richly beautiful, of the finest leathers, exquisitely designed.

He married his first wife, Marie Brabançon, in 1588. During her life all his books were marked with a cypher monogram made up of the superimposed initials I. A. M., standing for Jacques-Auguste, and Marie. The intersections of the A and M form a , Greek for Th (Thou), hence the monogram contains his full initials combined with those of his wife.

In this manner he marked the red morocco of Simler's book, placing the cypher in each panel of the back and emblazoning the sides with his armorial stamp with golden bees. After Marie's death De Thou changed the arms and the monogram.

The famous collection was left to François-Auguste, De Thou's eldest son by his second wife, Gasparde de Chastre. But

François came to grief at an early age, and in 1642 was beheaded for conspiring with Cinq Mars against Cardinal Richelieu, the library passing to his brother, Jacques-Auguste, who later took the title of Baron de Meslay.

In 1677 the books came to Jacques-Auguste De Thou, abbé de Samer-aux-Bois et de Souillac. Within three years, however, it became difficult for the abbé to maintain it, and the collection was sold, with the exception of a few manuscripts which went to the King's library, to the celebrated bibliophile Charron, Marquis de Ménars.

Although one of his least attractive acts was to marry his own sister, fortune followed Ménars. He derived pleasure from the books for forty years and, in 1706, sold them for the enormous sum of 40,000 *livres* to Armand-Gaston de Rohan, Bishop of Strasbourg. The bishop bequeathed the library, with other volumes, to his nephew, Charles de Rohan, Prince de Soubise.

Soubise was a successful courtier, and, although inefficient as a soldier, became Marshal of France through his friendship with Louis XIV and the favouritism of Madame de Pompadour. It is not probable that he ever read Simler's book, and, two years after his death in 1787, the huge library was sold, thus dispersing the De Thou collection.

At that time the headmaster of Harrow School was Joseph Drury, a man of scholarly attainments. He was thirty-seven years of age at the time of the De Thou sale and appears to have secured some of the volumes. The name of his son is written on the fly-leaf of Simler's book.

The elder Drury continued as headmaster of Harrow until 1805, while during the latter portion of his term his son, Henry Joseph Thomas Drury, was master of the lower school.

One of their pupils was Lord Byron, who arrived at Harrow at the age of ten, remaining from the summer of 1801 until October 1805, during which time he distinguished himself more in manly sport and in affairs of the heart than in study. Yet the boy Byron must have read, and read widely. In fact, he himself (in 1807) indicates that he had read or looked through historical books and novels 'by the thousand.'

The relation between Byron and the Drurys was evidently a different one from that usually existing between pupil and teachers. Byron speaks most warmly of the elder Drury in a note to '*Childe Harold*' (canto iv, st. 75), and under the name of Probus in '*Childish Recollections*,' and lines *On a Change of Masters* in '*Hours of Idleness*.'

In Moore's '*Life of Lord Byron*' are to be found several letters from the poet to his former tutor, the younger Drury,

written in affectionate terms and without much regard to the propriety usually preserved in correspondence with a divine.

One likes to think that his schoolmasters may have shown Simler's little book to Byron—certainly he had the run of their library—and that its contents became the subconscious inspiration that led to 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage,' and 'Manfred.' The love of highland scenery was already implanted; Byron himself dates it from an excursion to Ballater in 1796. Can it be that from Simler's book some dim-remembered phrase gave rise to:

' . . . mountain, dusk, yet clear,
Mellowed and mingling, yet distinctly seen, . . . ' ?

Probably this is too much to hope for, and all that one can say safely is that the book and Byron were at Harrow together.

The scene changes. In 1783 William Beckford, the wealthy and distinguished amateur in English literature, went to Switzerland on his honeymoon with Lady Margaret Gordon as his bride.

In the following year there was published at Lausanne his book 'Vathek,' a tale of the East, which later made a remarkable impression upon Byron. After the death of his wife, Beckford spent some time in travelling on the Continent, ultimately returning to England where he began in 1796 to erect in Wiltshire his magnificent residence, Fonthill Abbey.

Financial difficulties, through the loss of two estates, compelled him to sell Fonthill in 1822; fortunately for him, as the great central tower fell shortly afterward. Beckford settled at Bath, where he occupied himself with building and collecting works of art until his death in 1844.

Drury, the younger, master at Harrow, sold his own library in 1827, part of it being acquired by Beckford, then five years established at Bath. A lover of beautiful things, the fine binding may have attracted him; but in any event he secured Simler's book, which so long before had belonged to De Thou. Beckford's eldest daughter married the 10th Duke of Hamilton, and his collections remained in the family until 1882, when they were sold at auction.

Simler's book was shortly afterward acquired by the late Rev. W. A. B. Coolidge, who considered it one of the unique volumes in his library at Grindelwald, using it as the basis of his great work, 'Josias Simler et Les Origines de l'Alpinisme jusqu'en 1600.'

Seldom it is that one knows with precision the contemporary

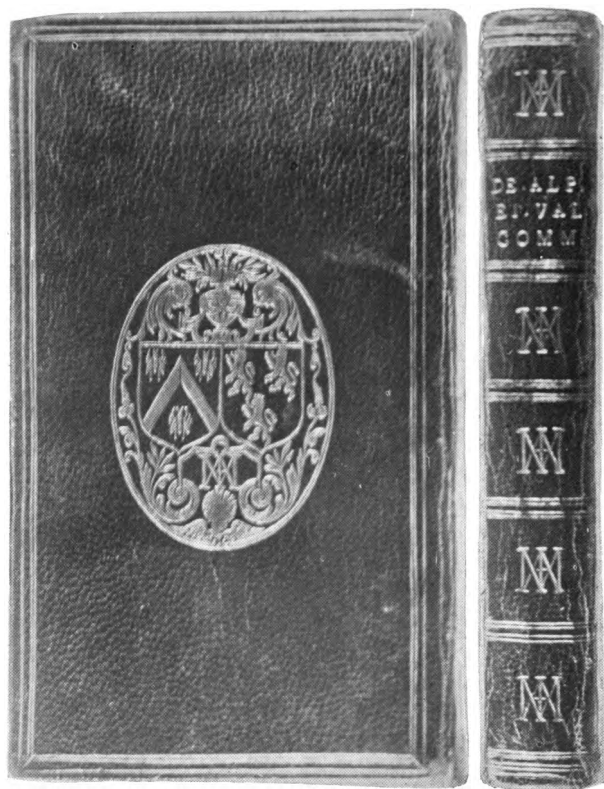




CONRAD GESNER

(1516-1565).

(Originals in possession of College of Physicians, Philadelphia.)



Simler's "Vallesiae Descriptio et De Alpibus Commentarius," in the contemporary binding of De Thou, showing the armorial stamp with golden bees, and the cipher monogram. (Dimensions of cover, 6.5" x 4".)

owner of a sixteenth-century book ; still rarer to be able to trace the successive hands through which it has passed.

Because of an old man's story of his adventure in the Pyrenees this book was purchased by a young statesman, then at the beginning of his career. It belonged to many men, good and bad, of high position and of low. Some treasured it for the beauty of its binding ; a few, perhaps, may have benefited from its content. It came close to a great poet, and it is pleasant to think that the boy Byron may have looked into it before he himself saw the Alps !

Simler's book in the Beckford sale brought £1 12s., and since then has largely increased in value. I know, because I bought it myself only the other day.

[NOTE.—The data on which this paper is based have been gathered from numerous sources : M. de Candale's attempt on the Pic du Midi d'Ossau is described in Coolidge's 'Simler' (p. 59**), and in Gribble's 'The Early Mountaineers.' These books contain chapters on Simler as does also Coolidge's 'Swiss Travel and Swiss Guide-Books.' The best account of the De Thou library and its successive owners will be found in Guigard's 'Nouvel Armorial du Bibliophile' (1890 edit., vol. 2). Additional information on the family of De Thou occurs in the 'Bibliothèque Universelle.' For the Drurys, Byron, and Beckford, see the 'Dictionary of National Biography.'

The firm which purchased the Coolidge library segregated a small group of books in fine bindings, among them the De Thou copy of Simler's work.—J. M. T.]

A PORTRAIT MEDAL OF CONRAD GESNER.

CONRAD GESNER (Gessner) (1516–65) was a Zürich physician of great learning, and a prolific writer on zoology, botany, and bibliography. Mountaineers honour his memory because of his ascent of one of the summits of Pilatus,¹ in 1555, and especially on account of his thrilling letter to Avienus,² which begins : 'I am resolved, henceforth, most learned Avienus, that, as long as it may please God to grant me life, I will ascend several mountains, or at least

¹ *Descriptio Montis Fracti sive Montis Pilati* (Zürich, 1555 ; in the same volume as Gesner's *De Raris et Admirandis Herbis*).

² *Epistola ad Jacobum Avienum de Montium Admiratione* (Zürich, 1541 ; prefixed to Gesner's *Libellus de lacte et operibus lactariis*).

one, every year . . . for the sake of good bodily exercise and of mental delight.' ³

The contemporary medal illustrated is of silver, 3 cm. in diameter, and bears on the obverse 'Conradus Gessnerus, M.D.' ⁴ with portrait bust in profile (1) in hat and costume of the period. On the reverse is a quartered coat-of-arms and crest, with the words 'Archiat. Prof. Phys. Tigurin' about the periphery, and 'Munific. Aug. 1562.' Although struck at Augsburg, the medal presumably commemorated his call to the chair of Natural History at Zürich in 1564.

The Gesner medal adds one more portrait to the few which preserve the likeness of one who was by far the greatest of the early mountaineers, an outdoor man in a day when the only proper place for a scientist was supposed to be the study; one, whom, if he could come to life again, any modern mountaineer would be glad to climb with.

J. MONROE THORINGTON.

THE ALPINE CLUB PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION, 1927.

THE annual exhibition of Alpine photographs was held at the Club Rooms from December 12 to December 31, 1927.

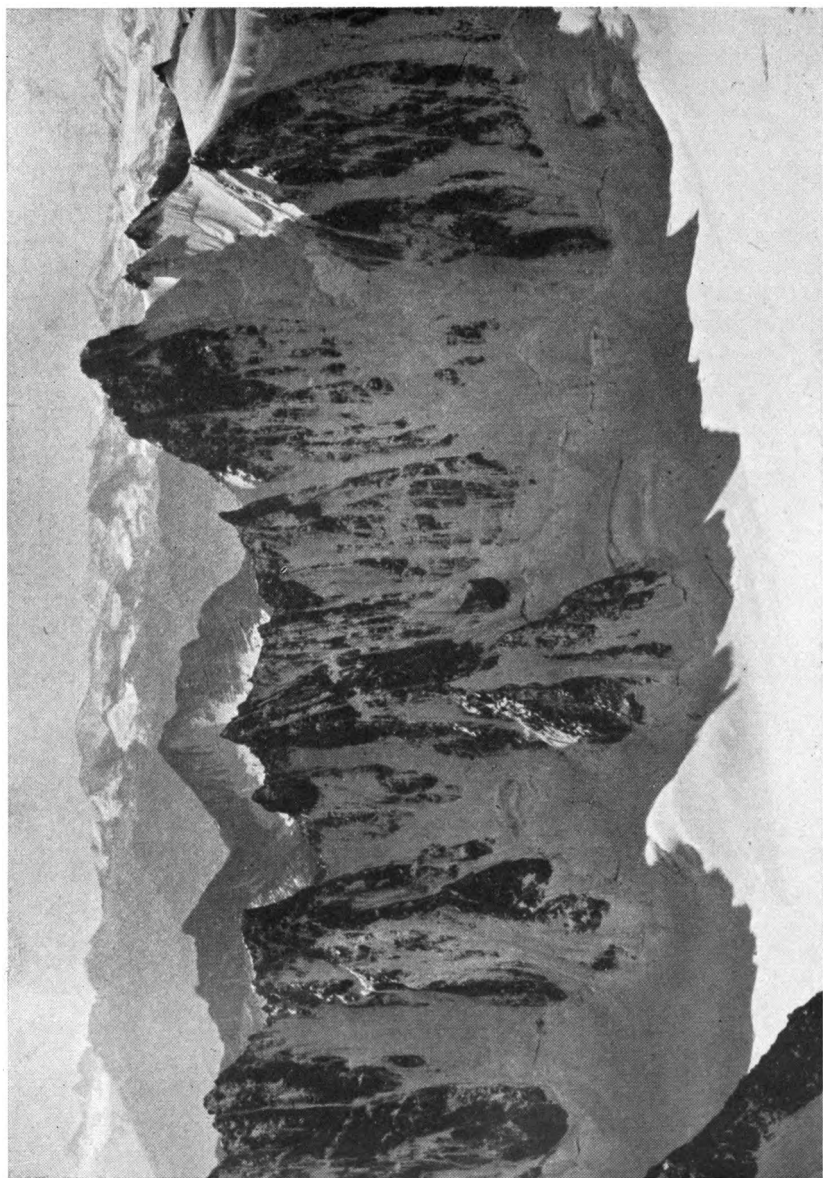
The number of exhibits was below the average, but, on the whole, the standard of technique was high. There was, however, a noticeable tendency among a certain portion of exhibitors to produce prints in which the scale of tones was too steep. Quite a number of prints just missed being really good for this reason. Harsh contrast is always easier to obtain than soft, and the secret of avoiding it forms a large part of what is known as 'good technique.' The prints in question would have been far more pleasing if they had been made on a grade of paper more capable of the true reproduction of the scale of tones of the negative.

One or two prints were marred by the presence of excessive grain. We are aware that some people like this, and call it texture—but, unless it is deliberately aimed at, when it becomes a debatable point, it is inexcusable.

Modern emulsions are so good and so uniform that, given an adequate exposure followed by soft development, a negative

³ Cf. *Swiss Travel and Swiss Guide-Books*, W. A. B. Coolidge (Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1889), p. 12; and *The Early Mountaineers*, Francis Gribble (T. Fisher Unwin. London, 1899), p. 51ff.

⁴ *Annals of Medical History*, viii. pp. 360-69; portrait of Gesner, iii. p. 133.



Phot. S. Matsukata.

COL DOLENT AND AIGUILLE DU TRIOLET.

should result from which prints can be taken to a very high degree of enlargement before grain becomes obtrusive.

Mr Henry Speyer contributed two remarkably fine pictures. In 'Mont Blanc from above Sallanches'—although it seems that a contrasty paper has been used—the treatment has been so skilful that there is nothing harsh in the result; and although Mont Blanc stands out clearly against a very dark sky, it looks distant, even ethereal. The receding planes are well marked, and the heavy belt of trees in the middle foreground is well lit by sun and shows considerable detail. There is no trace of spottiness in this, nor in the foreground meadow, as might so easily have been the case with less clever handling. A very effective subject, well chosen and finely treated.

Even better is 'Evening Light on Monte Rosa from the Cima' by the same photographer. Mr. Speyer has been fortunate enough to catch a very fine effect, and has used his opportunity to the full. The lighting of the clouds is unusually interesting, and the whole composition is excellent. In spite of the lack of foreground the mountain seems to stand up, massive and rugged, from the gulf of the valley, giving an impression of immense depth below.

Mr. F. S. Smythe showed two very effective prints in 'Sunset from the Grüneckhorn' and 'The Dent d'Hérens.' The effect secured in the former is magnificent and although the photograph is dramatic it is not theatrical, as are so many taken straight into the light. Adequate exposure has given correct tone values; there is texture and detail in the snow—even in the darkest shadow. The sky, too, is well rendered. These qualities are repeated in 'The Dent d'Hérens,' which is made particularly impressive by the fact that the clouds and shoulder of the mountain are well lit up, while the main mass is in deep shadow.

A very attractive picture is 'The Wetterhorn, Schreckhorn, and Finsteraarhorn, from Bachsee,' exhibited by Mr. W. A. Wright. Faultless technique and artistry have made full use of a fine subject, and the treatment of the reflections in the water of cloud and mountains is restrained and delicate. There is atmosphere in this picture; a sense of distance and space.

'Pic Venizelos, Olympus,' by Boissonnas, exhibited by Mr. G. P. Baker, is most impressive. The composition is excellent and the use of a deep cleft of rock as foreground suggests both height and depth, while clouds floating around the peak give a sense of rugged wilderness.

In 'The Parpaner Weisshorn from the Hörnli Hut, Arosa,' Mr. L. M. E. Dent has rendered to perfection the beautiful effect of dappled sunlight which is sometimes seen on the flanks of snow mountains and on snow fields. We are bound to say that we consider that this picture would have been more pleasing had it been free from grain—but this characteristic is not obtrusive when viewed from a distance of two or three yards; and the picture is of ample size to allow this.

Dr. J. Monroe Thorington showed a number of pictures interesting chiefly from a topographical point of view, but we consider that his 'The Twins, and the Athabaska Gorge, Columbia Ice Field, 1923,' is among the best photographs in the Exhibition. Composition has been helped by the introduction of a shadow (apparently that of a man) to give balance. A clever touch, for the inclusion of the figure itself would have been crude. This picture has shape, simplicity and excellent tone values, and loses nothing by being in miniature.

We particularly liked 'Festal Day at the Chapel of the Hohe Steigen, Saas-Fee,' by Mr. Ralph Morrish. It is printed in warm sepia tones which give a fine rendering of the sunlight on the white walls of the chapel, and on the path. The procession has been taken at just the right point, and there is an air of solemnity about the whole picture. One can almost hear the church bell.

'The King and the Pawn,' by Mr. Morrish, is a fine representation of the Matterhorn and has the additional attraction of a well-chosen title. Excellent, too, is 'The Bridge over the Visp, leading to Saastal' also printed in sepia.

'The Shrouded Matterhorn,' by Mr. F. N. Ellis, is a clever reproduction of what we imagine must have been a very fleeting opportunity, and quite apart from its excellent technique it succeeds in presenting a familiar subject in an unconventional light. In this connexion Mr. S. L. Pearce's 'Matterhorn from the Riffelhorn' is noteworthy. We admire the skill which obtained such true tone values and the discrimination which selected so effective a view point.

An interesting group of photographs was shown by the Rev. A. E. Murray. These photographs, taken in Iceland, are up to the high standard of excellence one would expect from this experienced photographer. Two of them, however, were in our opinion outstanding, namely, 'Gothafoss, North Iceland' (reproduced in the JOURNAL) and 'Blafells Jökull from Hvitarvatn, Iceland.' The former has all the good



Phot. E. S. Herbert.

ICE-CLIFF ON THE AIGUILLE D'ARGENTIÈRE.

qualities that distinguish the best photographs of waterfalls—always a difficult subject—and the latter is a beautifully composed picture—perfect in its scale of tones—giving a great sense of distance. This, in our opinion, is as good a photograph as any in the exhibition.

Miss Ulrica R. Dolling's two contributions 'Piz Bernina and Piz Roseg' and 'The Bernina Range' are proof that harsh contrast is not necessary to convey a sense of sunshine. Technically excellent, these pictures are delightfully soft and full of light. The same remarks apply to Mr. J. Osborne Walker's 'Monte Rosa and Lyskamm' which also has the advantage of some beautiful light clouds—which serve to throw the mountains well back into the distance. We liked Mr. Walker's 'Bertol Path' for its sound technique and the pleasant story it has to tell. Mr. Arthur Gardner showed amongst others: 'Evening in the Lötschental' and 'The Matterhorn'—both of which will be familiar to readers of his interesting book on mountain photography. The treatment of the former is particularly fine, and the warm sepia tones suit the subject admirably. The lighting is perfectly rendered, and it would be difficult to find a better piece of composition. Mr. Gardner's 'Matterhorn' is more conventional but it is worthy of mention if only for its sound technique. We did not care for his photograph of 'The Ober Gabelhorn from Mountet.'

Mr. Matsukata showed three good pictures in 'Grande Ruine,' 'La Meije' and 'Triolet and Col Dolent' (the latter reproduced in the JOURNAL), but we think they would have been more effective if the negatives had received softer development or, alternatively, if a softer grade of paper had been selected. Miss L. Marion Davidson sent in four attractive pictures of the Dolomite district. There is always a great deal of personality in this photographer's work. Her subjects are well chosen and treated with originality. Our preference lies with 'Sasso Lungo, Sella and Piz Pordoi' and 'Cimone della Pala, San Martino di Castrozza'; though 'The Langkofel in Sunset' also deserves special mention.

There were many other pictures we should like to commend: The excellent telephoto of 'Mont Blanc from the Tour Noir,' by Sir William Lister; 'An Ice Cliff on the Aiguille d'Argentière' (reproduced in the JOURNAL), and 'The Ober Gabelhorn from the Trifhorn,' by Mr. E. S. Herbert; 'Grandes Jorasses from the Couvercle' and 'Afternoon, Rieder Furka'; 'Glacier du Géant and Mont Blanc,' by Miss H. F. Margaret

King; 'Lyskamm, Monte Rosa, from Pollux,' by Mr. J. C. Gait; 'Aiguille du Roc au Grépon,' by Miss Nea E. Barnard; 'Mischabelhörner,' by Mr. Julian A. Osler; 'The Bietschhorn,' by Mr. Philip H. Pilditch; 'The Summit of the Gross Schreckhorn,' by Mr. E. Montague Jackson; 'Matterhorn from Schwarzsee Path,' by Miss M. Neve; 'The mist climbed slowly putting out the stars,' by Mr. H. S. Bullock.

Mr. H. R. Williams's photograph 'On the Aiguille du Chardonnet' (reproduced in the JOURNAL) was one of the best figure studies we can remember.

The skilful arrangement of the Exhibits was, as usual, carried out by Mr. Sydney Spencer.

It is a remarkable fact that in almost every Club there is found a member who is willing to devote considerable time and attention to its service, but we venture to think that the Alpine Club is unusually fortunate in this respect.

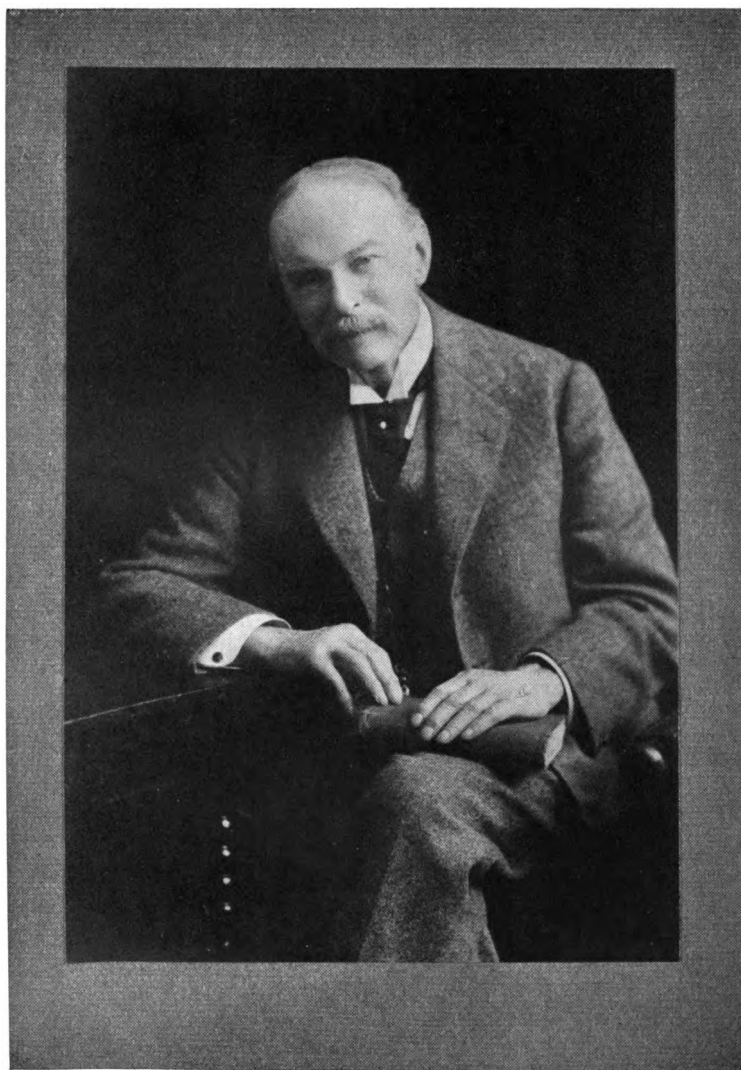
IN MEMORIAM.

ELIOT HOWARD.

(1842-1927.)

By the death of Eliot Howard at the age of 85, the Club loses one of its rapidly vanishing band of survivors of the pioneering '60's. He was elected in 1867, but his career as an active climber was prematurely cut short by a shooting accident by which he lost an eye, and he was thereafter so much troubled by inability to focus properly, especially going downhill, that he had to give up serious expeditions. The youngest son of Robert Howard of Tottenham, he was one of that remarkable circle of men of Quaker origin or connections who did so much to found the traditions of the Club. Kinship, circumstances, and personal charm brought him into more or less intimate association with a number of eminent men of the time such as Sir Edward Fry, Sir Edmund Gosse, Dr. Hodgkin, Sir Alfred Waterhouse, Sir E. B. Tylor among the non-climbers, and F. F. Tuckett, the Mathews, John Ball, Douglas Freshfield, the Buxton cousins, J. H. Fox and others who early became prominent members of the Club. Some of these connections were due to his friendship and subsequent marriage with Charlotte Fox Tuckett, sister of the great 'F. F. T.' and also of the brilliant Elizabeth Tuckett, in whose 'Zigzagging among Dolomites' he figured as 'E. H.'

Most of his climbing was done with Tuckett in the Eastern Alps, and he wrote an account of their earliest ascent of the Terglou



ELIOT HOWARD.
1842-1927.

(Triglav) in this JOURNAL¹ in 1869. It is curious to note that he brought the first rucksack from Styria into Switzerland, where it created much interest and was speedily adopted universally. (In these days it is equally curious to recall that his nephew Gerald Fox brought the first pair of ski from Norway to that country only about thirty-seven years ago.)

Though cut off from active climbing, he always retained the keenest interest in the mountains, and in a journey round the world with Tuckett in 1891 took a share in founding the New Zealand Alpine Club.

He was chairman of Hayward Tyler & Co. Ltd., the London and Luton engineers, but devoted much time to public and philanthropic affairs. He was chairman of more bodies than can be mentioned in a short notice, but one may perhaps note that he was for 49 years a member and for long chairman of the Beacontree bench in Essex, his *obiter dicta* being a regular feature of the London evening papers on Saturdays. He was also lay-chairman of the Medical Committee of the Church Missionary Society from its inception and an active worker in various religious organizations such as the London City Mission, the Spezzia Mission, etc.

His cultured and receptive mind was a storehouse of knowledge, ranging from the practical work of his profession—incidentally he was the oldest member of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers—to ethnological and antiquarian research. He wrote a good deal in an unobtrusive way on antiquarian and religious subjects, his most important publication being 'The Eliot Papers,' which has been widely appreciated both here and in America for its literary charm and historical interest, some of the family records and diaries being contemporary with Pepys and Evelyn. The mainspring of his life was an unswerving devotion to his Christian beliefs and to the public weal. He served his generation well.

G. E. H.

JOHN HERTSLET WAINEWRIGHT.

(1848-1927.)

By the death of John Hertslet Wainewright on December 11 of last year the Club loses one of its older members, elected in 1875. Born on October 27, 1848, the son of John Wainewright, the last of the Taxing Masters, he was called to the Bar, but as he was then considered to be suffering from heart trouble he was advised to give up all idea of practising and was sent to Homburg, Spa, and other cure resorts. In 1872 he paid his first visit to Switzerland and spent three weeks on the Rigi as an after-cure. Thence he moved to Campfer, paying his first visit to the Engadine, which was to

¹ 'The Terglou and Mangert in Carniola,' *A.J.* 4, 345-65.

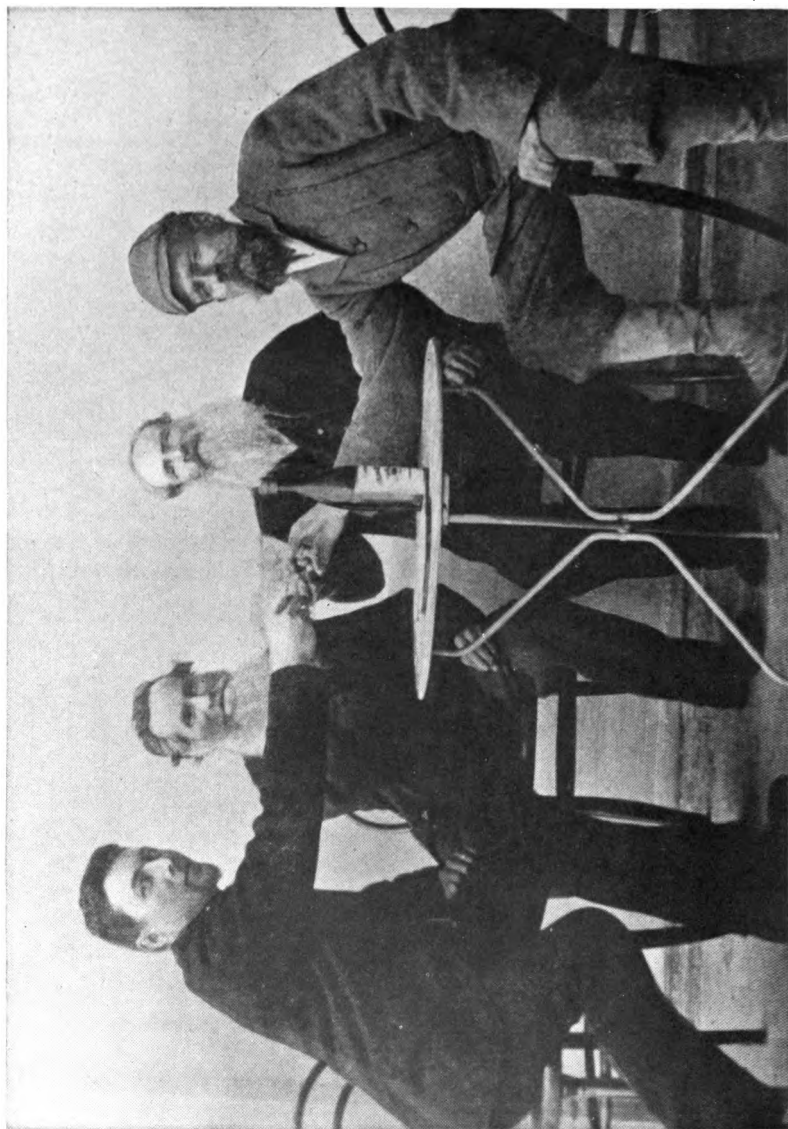
become his second home. The air there worked wonders, and to the end of his life he maintained that he felt better there than anywhere else. During this visit he had his first experience of a mountain ascent. A curious expedition constituting a party of eight, including Admiral Horton, Lord Chelsea, Lord Mahon, Dr. Burney Yeo, Wainewright and others, was equipped and provisioned almost on the lines of a Himalayan or Arctic expedition and drove to Pontresina for the ascent of Piz Languard, while their families and friends waited tense with excitement for their return! In after years when he conducted excursions up the Languard or over the Diavolezza two or three times a week, he often smiled at the recollection of this historic occasion. One day, however, during a walk through the woods past the Statzersee he had noticed a friendly brown village lying on the other side of the river shining in the afternoon sun and at once decided that this was the place for him. He moved his quarters first to the Hôtel Roseg and later to the Kronenhof, and from this time onwards Pontresina remained unrivalled in his affections as a summer resort.

In the Upper Engadine and neighbourhood he ascended all the principal peaks with Hans and Christian Grass and other leading guides, while in later years he conducted almost daily expeditions up the Piz Languard, over the Diavolezza, or on to the Morteratsch Glacier. These expeditions are remembered by his numerous friends as their first introduction to snow and ice, and to many he appeared as the father of the place. He was ever ready with advice to the inexperienced, and new-comers to the district found him a mine of accurate information on all expeditions and ascents in the region; indeed one of the leading characteristics of his mind was his retentive memory and extreme accuracy regarding details of old ascents. Certainly the happiest times of his life were spent in the mountains. His first winter in the Alps was spent at Samaden in 1875 at the Hôtel Bernina with those admirable old-fashioned hosts the Fanconis, and for many years he was a constant winter visitor to the 'Kulm' at St. Moritz. He made several winter ascents, including the first ascent of the Piz Palü in winter on February 27, 1890,¹ which occupied 17½ hours, with his friend, the still active Major W. H. Bulpett.

In 1877 he visited Zermatt and climbed the Matterhorn, Lyskamm, and several other peaks with François Dévouassoud, and in 1878 spent the early summer at Grindelwald with François, ascending the Jungfrau, Wetterhorn, and Schreckhorn, but was prevented from carrying out his full programme by a severe attack of sciatica.

In September of the same year, however, he visited Tyrol with his wife and François, ascending many of the peaks then in vogue. He returned to Tyrol with his brother Benjamin a few years later, and again climbed at Zermatt in 1879.

¹ *A.J.* 15, 153.



HERR L. GREDIG, HANS and CHRISTIAN GRASS, J. H. WAINEWRIGHT
about 1888.

In the Upper Engadine he appears to have climbed practically every peak except the Piz Scerscen and made expeditions in the neighbouring Arosa, Bergün and Bregaglia districts. He made the traverse of the Güssfeldt Sattel for the first time in one day.

He also travelled in the Italian Alps and ascended Monte Viso.

Wainewright, though not robust and never thoroughly at home in rock-climbing, was a splendid walker and excelled on snow peaks, where he revelled in soft snow, often to the discomfort of his companions, including the guides. As a rule, he stuck to the usual mountain routes, but in 1889 made a variation of the route previously followed up the Piz Roseg, which is the route now usually taken. He was a true lover of the Alps, and there can be no doubt that he owed his improved health and comparative longevity to his frequent sojourns in the Engadine both in summer and winter.

E. J. G.

[I first met Mr. 'Jack' Wainewright at St. Moritz during the winter of 1895-96. He had then given up mountaineering 'officially,' but was still an indefatigable walker. It was his practice, during that and many following winters, to walk in the morning to Pontresina, which in those days had only a *Gast Stube* (i.e. one general sitting-room in the Kronenhof) open in winter, returning to St. Moritz for lunch. Immediately after his meal he walked to Silvaplana and back. This was his invariable daily habit, fine or snow—a distance of some 20 miles, since at that time only the main roads were open. He always carried a prodigious alpenstock some 10 ft. long and was burned a rich brown by exposure.

He did all in his power to encourage winter mountaineering—of which pastime he may be said to have been a pioneer—among all his numerous friends and acquaintances, but his success was not great. I well remember his walking up with the late Rev. Cecil Watson, in boots and through deep snow, to the old Boval Club Hut (an awful hovel) to greet me on my return from the third winter ascent of Piz Bernina in 1897. In fact, there were few winter ascents that I had the luck to accomplish in the years 1896-99 when I was not greeted at some portion of the descent by the slight active figure with its quaint gaiters and formidable *bâton*!

I last saw him at Pontresina during the so-called 'August' of 1924. I shall long remember the warmth of his greeting—and his remarks on the climate even of his beloved Upper Engadine. He, Mumm and I nearly reached the summit of Piz Languard in a blizzard. I do not think that it was Wainewright or Mumm who refused to continue, but Moritz Inderbinen had wisely turned back long before.

If in no sense a great mountaineer, there was no truer member of the Alpine Club or lover of the Alps than the old friend whose face Pontresina and the Gredig family will sorely miss.—E. L. S.]

ARNOLD LOUIS MUMM.

(1859–1927.)

ARNOLD LOUIS MUMM was born in London in 1859, the second son of Julius Mumm, of London, Reims and Cologne. His father was at that time one of the proprietors of a famous brand of champagne. His mother was an Irish lady, a daughter of a Dublin solicitor. After the death of her husband she made her home in England, where her four boys were educated. She had for many years a house in Hyde Park Street where Arnold Mumm lived with her till her death in 1917, when he set up for himself a bachelor establishment in Gloucester Terrace, a more remote part of Tyburnia.

Arnold Mumm's elder brother was sent to Harrow, but he and his next younger brother went to Eton as Collegers, and the youngest as an Oppidan. In both aspects, in work and in sport, Mumm's Eton career was a distinguished one. He won, in 1874, the Prince Consort's German prize, he was in the Select for The Newcastle in 1877 and 1879, and when he left was Captain of the School. Both in the Field and at the Wall—the Collegers' game—he was a noted football player. He also became joint editor of the *Eton College Chronicle*.

In 1879 he went up to Oxford where he won a scholarship at Corpus. He followed up this successful start by getting three Firsts, in Classical Moderations, Literae Humaniores, and Jurisprudence. They were won—an Oxford contemporary writes—'with some ease.' A year or two later he stood for a Fellowship at All Souls; and it was currently reported that the Examiners had some difficulty in making up their minds between Mumm, the present Vice-Chancellor, and the present Bishop of Durham. Despite his successes in the schools Mumm found time and energy for sport and was one of his College football team during a season when it remained unbeaten.

On leaving Oxford Mumm came to London to study for the Bar, and in July 1886 was admitted in Lincoln's Inn, where he read in the chambers of Mr. C. Ackworth James, proposing to practise as an equity draftsman and conveyancer. He became a sound lawyer, and might have made himself a practice had he cared to do so. But he never laid himself out seriously for legal work. He had two serious impediments in his path: a sufficient private fortune and an exceedingly retiring disposition which was coupled throughout life with a complete absence of ambition.

One who knew Mumm well at this period writes: 'I have never met with anyone of Mumm's really great knowledge on many subjects, who was so modest about it. In fact, I doubt if he himself ever appreciated how wide his range of knowledge was, although everyone else who saw much of him was constantly impressed by it. He seemed totally devoid of self-assertion or ambition. With his wonderful industry and critical power, he could, I believe, had he wished it, have become prominent in many ways: he preferred not



ARNOLD LOUIS MUMM.
1859-1927.

to be so, and probably with his temperament it was to his own greater happiness.'

Having failed to find the pursuit of the Law congenial, Mumm had the happy thought of looking for occupation in literature: but it was to the practical and critical side of it, rather than the creative, that he turned. In 1894 he joined the publishing firm of his relative, Mr. Edward Arnold, and took part in its management for many years—until 1925—both as a Partner and Reader.

In many of the situations of life Mumm was inclined to play the part of a sympathetic but detached spectator. To his friends and associates he may have at times seemed too reluctant to accept the challenge of circumstance; too ready in everyday affairs to cultivate a philosophic calm. Yet his habitual reticence was in great part the result of a fastidious intellect, of a desire to weigh the matter in hand before he discussed a proposal or dealt with an argument.

With not a few of the habits and tastes of the painstaking and sedentary scholar and critic, Mumm kept up to the end a keen zest for sport and out of door pursuits. These two cross elements in his character remained constant. His intimate friends both at College and in after days were drawn mainly from literary and intellectual circles: but he was also an excellent shot and a good rider to hounds, and he became in turn a bold and persistent mountaineer and an adventurous traveller. It is in the latter qualities that we have to commemorate him here.

The earlier portion of Mumm's Alpine career may best be indicated by quoting the table of his qualifications put before the committee of the Club on his election in 1889. It shows that he had begun to climb at an early age, fourteen, and that he had in successive summers piled up a list which, for the length of the period covered, the variety in the districts visited, and also for the progressive character of the climbs—passes as well as peaks—might well serve as a model for future candidates. On these grounds, as well as for its personal interest, it seems worth quoting here in full.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- 1873 Titlis.
- 1874 Piz Corvatsch, Piz Morteratsch.
- 1876 Piz Glüschaint.
- 1877 Breithorn (Zermatt), Cima di Jazzi, Monte Rosa, Zinal-Rothhorn, Alphubeljoch.
- 1879 Monte Tofana, Cristallo Pass, Marmolata, Bildstöckljoch.
- 1881 Beichgrat, Petersgrat, Jungfrau (Mönchjoch), Weissmies, Adler Pass, Cols d'Hérens and de Bertol, Pas de Chèvres, Col de Mont Rouge, Col de Sonadon, Col du Géant.
- 1884 Isenthal to Engelberg over Griessen Glacier, Wendenjoch, Thierberg, Sustenlimmi, Galenstock—Triftlimmi.
- 1886 Lower peak of Balmhorn, Unter Gabelhorn, Rimpfischhorn, Col Durand, Moming Pass, Wellenkuppe.

- 1887 Lo Besso, Grand Cornier, Rothhorn (from Mountet to Zermatt), Matterhorn, Riffelhorn from Glacier, Ober Gabelhorn, Col de Valpelline, Mt. Brulé, Col de Chermontane, Grand Combin.
- 1888 Fletschhorn, Nadelhorn, Weissthor, Col delle Loccie, Lysjoch, Grivola.

In the summer following his election to the Club, Mumm set to work in earnest in Dauphiné, where he climbed the Sommet des Rouies, the Barre des Écrins, the Pelvoux, the Aiguille du Plat and the Meije. A long gap followed till in 1902 and 1904 he made a few minor expeditions in eastern Switzerland. He was one of the principal authorities on the Tödi Group.

In 1905 he surprised his friends by accepting an invitation to join Mr. Freshfield in the expedition to the Mountains of the Moon, described in the *ALPINE JOURNAL* (vol. 23). This African adventure, though unsuccessful in its main object, afforded Mumm some sport, and it also roused in him a new ambition to combine exploration with climbing. Accordingly, in 1907, we find him joining General Bruce and Dr. Longstaff in an exploration of the Garhwal district of the Himalaya, in the course of which Dr. Longstaff succeeded in making the first ascent of Trisul (23,400 ft.). Mumm gave the world a full and lively account of the party's doings, their successes and troubles in his chief contribution to mountaineering literature, a portly volume entitled *Five Months in the Himalaya*. Dr. Longstaff writes thus of Mumm's share in what proved a very arduous campaign : 'What struck me most during the whole of our trip was Mumm's extraordinary patience and unfailing good temper under discomfort, which was often aggravated in his case by indifferent health. It was wonderful how he endured those awful two nights and three days when we were weather-bound at our high camp (20,000 ft.), on the occasion of our first abortive attempt on Trisul. Never once did he complain, and he stuck it out to the last possible moment on the chance of pushing home the attack, though his guide Inderbinen and three of our Gurkhas had given in after the first night.'

To Moritz Inderbinen, his frequent companion in his many visits to the Far West, as well as in his African, Himalayan and Alpine travels, Mumm was warmly attached. Moritz was to Mumm an almost indispensable fellow-traveller, a friend as much as a guide. Moritz had seen something of the world in his youth ; he had spent several years in the household of Dr. Butler at Harrow ; he had married an English wife. On the mountains he was a capable rather than a brilliant leader. But he possessed a rare quality among Alpine peasants : he could enjoy distant travel, and make himself popular among all sorts and conditions of men. He died two years ago, aged seventy ; Mumm's tribute to him will be found in our pages ('A.J.' 38, 300-2).

In all these distant expeditions Mumm proved himself a most capable traveller ; in the more serious trials of camp life, whether in

the pathless jungles of Ruwenzori, or among the gorges and glaciers of Garhwal, he was an enduring, helpful and unselfish comrade. He had nerves ; but he kept them as a rule under strict control. It needed some sudden catastrophe, such as the sight of the sack containing his climbing boots being dropped by a porter and swept away by an African torrent in flood ; or a strange incident, such as an irrepressible monkey dancing at midnight among the mosquito curtains of his bed at Mombasa, to modify his habitual attitude of *mitis sapientia* and stir him to vigorous language or retributive action.

Safe home from the Himalaya, Mumm found a less strenuous field in which to indulge his lately-formed passion for the wilderness. He turned his steps to the Far West, where he made himself a welcome guest in the summer camps of the Canadian Alpine Club. We find him there repeatedly in the summers of 1909, 1910, 1911 and 1913. He climbed and explored in the Rockies and Selkirks vigorously and in every direction. In 1909, in company with Mr. Amery and Mr. Hastings, he made an expedition to the then remote Mount Robson, of which he wrote an account for the *Canadian Alpine Journal* (see also 'A.J.' 25). After a long interval caused by the War, when he served as a Special Constable, he returned to Banff in 1920.

In 1921 he reverted to the Alps and climbed the Dent Blanche and the Dent du Midi among other expeditions, his last great climbs.

In 1922 he set out alone on a voyage to the Antipodes. After paying what proved a farewell visit to the many hosts and climbing companions he had found in Canada he crossed the Pacific to visit his old Oxford friend, Sir Charles Eliot, the British Ambassador in Japan. There even Mumm failed to evade publicity ; he was welcomed by the local press as 'a wide-world-renowned mountaineer.' He was even greeted by an interviewer as 'a benefactor' on the ground that while Secretary to our own Club he 'had been so good as to act as midwife at the birth of that now flourishing body the Japanese Alpine Club.'

Mumm proceeded to climb Fujiyama and to make several expeditions among the so-called Japanese Alps. Sailing on to New Zealand he spent four weeks at the Hermitage, viewed the glaciers, and 'almost completed' the ascent of Mt. Hamilton.

He read a paper to the Club on this journey under the title of 'A Mixed Bag' ('A.J.' 36).

In the autumn of 1923 Mumm was again in the Alps celebrating by its repetition his earliest ascent, that of the Titlis, made fifty years before. This was followed next year by a few minor climbs in the Adula and Bernina groups ; but 1925 was apparently a blank in his climbing record.

It may be added that his taste for travel, once excited, grew and became independent of mountain climbing. He went more than once to Morocco ; and he joined his friend Sir Alexander Kennedy

in a visit to Petra, with the object of making an air survey of the ruins. This was secured by the help of the Government of Palestine Survey ('A.J.' 38, 138).

In 1926 while travelling in Tyrol with some old friends, Mumm's powers suddenly failed him. He had probably through life taxed to the full his physical force, and on his return to England he was warned to spare himself. Last summer he set out on a voyage to the Far East in company with Sir Charles Eliot. At Hong Kong he became seriously unwell and had to go for a time into the local hospital. He recovered, however, sufficiently to start on the return voyage alone. He wrote to the Club that he hoped to be home in time to attend our Annual Dinner. But on assembling for the Meeting we were met by the sad news that our old colleague had succumbed to his illness in the Bay of Biscay and died and been buried at sea on December 2.

His death is felt as a personal grief by his numerous friends; both in our own Club and also in the Canadian Club, in which he took much interest, it will be reckoned as a serious loss.

It remains only to add a few lines as to Mumm's official connexion with the Alpine Club. He was elected on the Committee in 1899, and served as Secretary from 1901 to 1905. From 1919 to 1922 he was one of the Vice-Presidents. It was due entirely to his characteristic diffidence that he did not succeed to the Presidency. He recognized and probably exaggerated what he felt his natural disqualifications for the post. As Secretary his benign and cheerful presence lent a grace even to the most formal of 'Proceedings.' He could drop, no one better, *obiter dicta*, often humorous and always fitted to the occasion. But an after-dinner speech addressed to an audience of 150 presented itself to his imagination as a task alien equally to his mentality and his physical powers.

But if Mumm shrank from the duties of the Presidential Chair it was not from any lack of devotion to the welfare of the Club. His interest in its affairs grew with years, until it culminated in his undertaking the onerous work of compiling by his unassisted labour and at his own cost a detailed *Register of Members of the Alpine Club*. The two volumes already published comprise the records of members elected up to 1876 inclusive. He has left a third volume ready for the Press. The task was a difficult one, for the material was widely scattered and often hard to come at. But Mumm found in it a congenial occupation and he gave himself up to it with unflagging energy.

The writer of this note has to thank several of Mr. Mumm's contemporaries and companions for much of the material embodied in the preceding pages.

D. W. F.

ROBERTSON LAMB.

(1865–1927.)

To many of us it is difficult to realize that Robertson Lamb has answered his last summons and left his comrades to mourn; for he seemed to have learned the secret of perennial youth. 'A man's age,' he used to say, 'should not be reckoned by his years, but by his feelings, and the condition of his mind and body.' And, indeed, measured by his own standard, Lamb died a very young man. To the last he retained his youthful exuberance and zest in living, and attributed it all to the hills for the health and inspiration they gave him. No opportunity of a walk on the hill-sides, a scramble among the fells, or an arduous climb on crag or mountain was ever allowed to pass unheeded. Only four days before the commencement of his last short illness he formed one of a party to climb the 'Devil's Kitchen'; and he climbed it well, without fatigue—in his old sure and cheery manner.

It was at a comparatively late period in his life that Lamb learned to climb. Though always devoted to healthy forms of out-door exercise, he was well advanced in the 'thirties' when, for the first time, he joined a climbing party at Wasdale, and at once realized that he had found the recreation at which he would excel. The little half-decked sailing yacht was sold, and thenceforth his eyes were lifted ever into the hills. He soon became a well-known figure at Wasdale, Pen-y-Gwryd and Sligachan, and other climbers often referred to him as too venturesome and a dare-devil; and they were wrong. Lamb was certainly quite fearless, but he knew his own strength and never strained it to breaking-point. And, moreover, he never willingly led a really difficult part of a climb without first making sure that the rest of his party was safely anchored in case of any accident to himself.

He spent several guideless seasons in the Alps—in the Dauphiné, Tarentaise, Central Alps, Oberland and Engadine. Perhaps the most noteworthy of his achievements were: Traverse of La Meije (1910), Mont Pourri (1911), Gross Simmelstock and other peaks of the Engelhörner (1913), Z'mutt arête of the Matterhorn (1921).

On the British hills two feats stand out from his innumerable climbs: the second ascent (with a new variation) of the N.W. face of Pillar, and the first ascent (not yet repeated, except by himself) of the gorge between the 3rd and 4th Pinnacles of Sgurr-nan-Gilleann.

Robertson Lamb was a successful Liverpool merchant, and at one time councillor of his native borough of Bootle. He was always thoughtful of the interests of his employees, and his kindly and lovable nature endeared him to a host of friends, whose number extends far beyond the circle of his comrades on the hills.

J. M. D.

MISS KATHERINE RICHARDSON.

(1854-1927.)

THE Editor of the ALPINE JOURNAL¹ did me a great honour when he asked me to write something about Miss Katherine Richardson, but I am sorry that I am not better qualified to do full justice to the climbing career of one who in the 'nineties had eclipsed all other women mountaineers, yet who, thanks to her modesty and beautiful character, had never aroused a trace of envy in any one of them.

Miss Richardson had already a magnificent series of ascents to her credit before I began to climb, and as the earlier of my chief ascents were made in winter it was a long time before I had the honour of meeting her. But I often heard of her doings through her famous guide, Emile Rey, and my own guide, Edouard Cupelin, and read of them in Alpine literature, so that before the red-letter day for me arrived when we met face to face I had conceived a great admiration for her both as a woman and a climber.

From that time onwards, though we rarely saw each other, we were never quite out of touch, and several of her neatly written, perfectly expressed letters lie before me, the last of which reached me when I was organizing the British Empire Fund towards the Restoration of Reims Cathedral, in which she took keen interest.

Miss Richardson was born in 1854, and during the eleven seasons she spent in the Alps she made 116 first-class ascents and 60 minor ones, a number of the latter without guides. I owe many details of her career to an article in *La Montagne* of December 1927, written by Mademoiselle Mary Paillon, with whom Miss Richardson had resided for many years. Mademoiselle Paillon has been a friend of mine for nearly as long a period.

After ascending several of the less important of the Engadine peaks in 1871, Miss Richardson returned there and in 1879 crossed the three summits of Piz Palü, thus making the first of her many notable new climbs or combinations. In 1882 she accomplished a remarkable *tour de force*, ascending the Rothhorn (16 hours, including halts from Zinal to Zermatt), the Weisshorn, Monte Rosa, and the Matterhorn (18 hours up and down from Zermatt, including halts) in eight days. The times of all her ascents show how quick she was on the mountains, and this was due to the excellence of her climbing and not to any special attempt to break records.

In 1888 Miss Richardson made the ascent of the Aiguille de Bionnassay and crossed the arête thence to the Dôme du Goûter, the first time that this had been accomplished. Up to then many experienced climbers had considered the feat impossible. For a

¹ As one of the two most distinguished lady mountaineers of the time, it is most fitting that Mrs. Le Blond should have acceded, so kindly, to my request.—E. L. S.

long time the party had to progress along the narrow ridge *à cheval*, and during the climb, which took 16 hours 10 minutes actual going, nearly an hour was lost owing to an enforced rest due to the fatigue of the guide Bich. Two days later Miss Richardson climbed all five peaks of the Aiguille des Grands Charmoz, and the same season had the great satisfaction of being the first lady to reach the summit of La Meije. In connection with this ascent Mademoiselle Paillon relates an amusing anecdote. It seems that while at Chamonix Miss Richardson saw a paragraph in a paper to the effect that an Englishwoman had arrived at La Bérarde with the intention of attempting the ascent of the Meije. As Miss Richardson had made her plans for some other climbs before going to Dauphiné she could not hurry off there immediately, but as soon as she had accomplished what she had intended she started for La Bérarde, feeling very anxious lest a peak which she had set her heart on being the first lady to ascend should have been wrested from her. Wondering who the enterprising Englishwoman could be, Miss Richardson found when she arrived that she had been chasing her own shadow, for the lady in question was herself !

Not only was Miss Richardson the first lady to climb the Meije, but she was the first person to do so from La Bérarde without sleeping out. She left her hotel at 9 P.M., and, halting for two hours on the rocks to await daylight, reached the summit at 7.30 A.M. and was back at the village at 5.30 P.M. Two days later she crossed Les Ecrins, again making her start from the hotel and taking 15 hours from door to door.

In 1889 Miss Richardson ascended the Aiguille de la Za by a new route up the W. face overlooking Arolla. The same season her wonderful endurance was shown in the following five expeditions accomplished in six days: Mont Blanc de Seillon, Pointe de Vouasson, Dent Perroc, Pigne d'Arolla by a new route, and the traverse of the Aiguilles Rouges, *en col*. But this series of climbs was excelled the same year by the ascents of the Aiguille Verte, the Aiguille de Talèfre, and the two peaks of the Dru, the three expeditions being made in five days. The latter climb was done for the first time from the Petit Dru to the Grand Dru (August 1) and necessitated at that period the presence of two parties on the mountain at the same time who should arrive from opposite directions, the one party pulling the other up the vertical slabs of the Grand Dru, and subsequently being let down by them. Miss Richardson's party consisted of herself and the guides Emile Rey and Jean Baptiste Bich, while the other was an English party, that of Messrs. Nash and Williams, with François Simond, Frédéric Payot, and Edouard Cupelin. All left the Montenvers at the same time and arrived on their respective summits within five minutes of each other. When Miss Richardson reached the top of the wall of the Grand Dru, their rope was thrown down to the others, but it caught in the rocks and the latter party had to content themselves with a portion

of it which they managed to cut off. This delayed their descent and they were obliged to spend the night on the mountain. Miss Richardson regained the Montenvers at 10.15 P.M.

The following year (1890) Miss Richardson, the day after ascending the Lyskamm, crossed Pollux to Zermatt, making the first descent by the N. face, and the same season she made the first ascent of the Aiguille du Chardonnet by a lady and by a new route.

Miss Richardson and Mademoiselle Paillon were together on the Southern Aiguille d'Arves, till then unclimbed by a lady, and the former insisted that her friend should step ahead and so be actually the first to reach the summit. In 1893 they made the third ascent of the eastern peak of the Meije and the first by ladies. The last climb made together by these two ardent lovers of the mountains was that of the Pelvoux. Mademoiselle Paillon's eyesight had begun to trouble her, and a slip on an ice slope was the result of imperfect vision, so after that she gave up first-class climbing and Miss Richardson insisted on doing the same. A peak in Dauphiné was called after her by Monsieur Maurice Paillon, and when she heard of it her surprise was great!

Like not a few great mountaineers, Miss Richardson had many interests and excelled in various pursuits. She was a good musician, an artist of no mean powers and a delightful companion, and so modest that except for short records in Alpine periodicals no accounts of her achievements were ever written by her for publication. She passed away at Oullins (Rhône) on August 20, 1927, under the roof of that friend to whom she had been as a sister for so many years.

Miss Richardson joined the Ladies' Alpine Club, on my invitation, very soon after it was formed, and she was our Vice-President for France. We mourn her loss very deeply.

E. LE B.

ALFRED SIMOND.

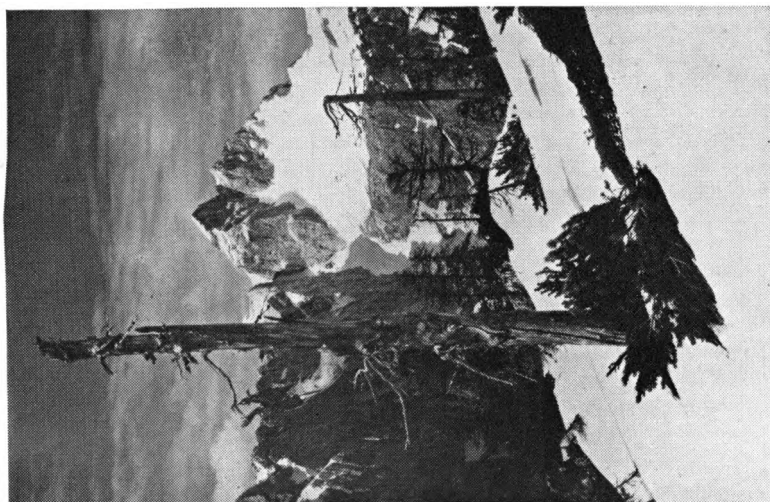
(1851-1927.)

On December 2, 1927, Alfred Simond passed away at the age of 76. He was one of a family of guides well known to habitués of Chamonix some forty years or so ago, and his elder brother François, who first ascended the Grépon from the S., is still alive and over 80 years old.

Both gave up climbing somewhat early in life, and took over from the Tairraz family, somewhere about the year 1888, the Montenvers Hotel and Chapeau restaurant, on lease from the Commune of Chamonix, and held it until the War broke out. Alfred was in charge at the Montenvers and François managed the Chapeau, and therefore Alfred will be remembered by many members rather as an innkeeper than as a guide. But he was really



ALFRED SIMOND.
1851-1927.



JALOVEC IN WINTER.

more than that, for to the climbing fraternity at the Monteners he was the kindest and keenest and most helpful of friends. Nothing was too much trouble for him, either as regards finding a guide or discussing an expedition, and he was as pleased as the climber himself if the expedition resulted in success.

Occasionally he would desert his hotel and join one for a climb, and if back in time for table d'hôte, you would see him attending to his duties as courteous as ever, and few would guess that he had probably started at 2 A.M., and had had a long and arduous day.

The late Sir Edward Davidson referred to his climbing powers in 'A.J.' 25, 57, and I can thoroughly endorse what Christian Klucker told Sir Edward, for Simond was, I think, the neatest rock climber I have ever had the good fortune to climb with.

In August 1923 I went down to Lavancher and called on him at his house to which he had retired, and I shall never forget his pleasure at meeting me again and talking over old times.

So another old guide has passed away, and there are many of us who feel that we have lost a friend who contributed in no small way to our pleasure and happiness in our scrambles in the Monteners district during his long sojourn at that unique hotel.

G. H. M.

NEW EXPEDITIONS.

Mont Blanc Group.

CAPUCIN DU REQUIN, 3047 m. = 10,097 ft., *Vallot*. August 4, 1927. The guides V. Hugonnet, Alfred Couttet, Marcel Bozon and Edouard Ravanel. From the Refuge du Requin, cross the great adjacent snow slope towards the N.E. and clamber on to the Capucin's rocky ridge at the lowest depression. Climb the awkward crest for some 150 ft., and then traverse by a *descent* on the right towards a gully; go up its left branch to an overhang which is turned with difficulty to the right. Eventually the crest is regained and followed to near the base of the summit aiguille. Go up a rock outcrop on the face by a difficult chimney and, from the platform thus reached, throw a string by means of a weight over the top; the rope is then attached and drawn gently over the top, when you swarm by it up to the summit, which affords comfortable room for four persons (? 3 hours). From *La Montagne*, 1927, p. 342.

AIGUILLE DE ROC DU GRÉPON [Mummery's 'Crag on the Grépon'], 3409 m. = 11,187 ft., *Vallot*. August 6, 1927. Miss Miriam O'Brien with Alfred Couttet and Georges Cachat. Leaving Monteners at 02.20, party took the route of the Grépon by the Mer de Glace face ('Red Tower'). Halt on first platform above Glacier de

Trélaporte, 05.45. Steering towards 'Red Tower,' party crossed couloir, descending from *Brèche du Roc*—falling stones. Bearing diagonally towards the left by broken rocks, they attained a series of broad terraces immediately below the slabs of the first conspicuous tooth on the buttress falling from the A. de Roc and forming the edge of the main Couloir de Roc-Grépon. Leaving terraces at 07.45, a short traverse to the left brought them to a long and narrow gully leading up to the watershed and behind the aforementioned-conspicuous tooth. Mount the gully by its true left edge for some 75–100 ft.; next traverse to its right edge and, by slabs, attain the head of the gully marked by a gap in the buttress, just behind the tooth. A traverse to the left by a narrow ledge is followed by a chimney. Turning to the right, the party climbed straight up for about 120 ft. by difficult slabs and cracks; next, traversing first right and then left, they arrived on the crest of the smooth buttress forming the margin of the couloir descending from between the A. de Roc and the Bec d'Oiseau (3417 m., *Vallot*). Climb the crest of the buttress to the base of the conspicuous chimney below the summit. This is the *cruz* of the ascent. Climb this exposed and narrow chimney, some 120 ft. high, to a small platform whence the face of the A. de Grépon first becomes visible. Climbing up a few feet, a rope was thrown over a boss, and, by an awkward swing and scramble, the party attained the diminutive summit, 11.20. Descent in bad weather by the same route, 12 *rappels*, to Montenvers, 20.10.

Difficulties comparable to the Mer de Glace face of Grépon, but less fatiguing.

Ascent repeated on August 13 by three Anglo-French 'mixed' parties. From G. H. M., *Annuaire*, 1928, pp. 31–35. [For a view of the A. de Roc see 'A.J.' 38, facing 267, and *Mummery*, facing p. 150.]

AIGUILLE DU CHARDONNET, 3822 m. = 12,540 ft., B.I.K. By the S. face. July 31, 1927. C. Dévouassoud and O. S. Crouan. From the upper Chardonnet moraine, follow the great couloir bending E. to W.; from its head turn left, N., and climb by the glacier-polished rocks of a rib, on either slope, to a great tower. Turn the tower to the left, *descend* to the right (ascending) by a little gully. Next climb straight up by the left bank of an ice-chimney; finally, by easier slabs, attain the crest of the rock-rib. Follow its snowy and corniced crest to the top. Conditions very bad.

Times :

Jardin, dep.	.	.	.	.	.	.	02.45
Moraine	.	.	.	.	.	.	04.40
Head of couloir	.	.	.	.	.	.	07.00
Summit	.	.	.	.	.	.	12.30

From G. H. M., *Annuaire*, 1928, pp. 43–44.

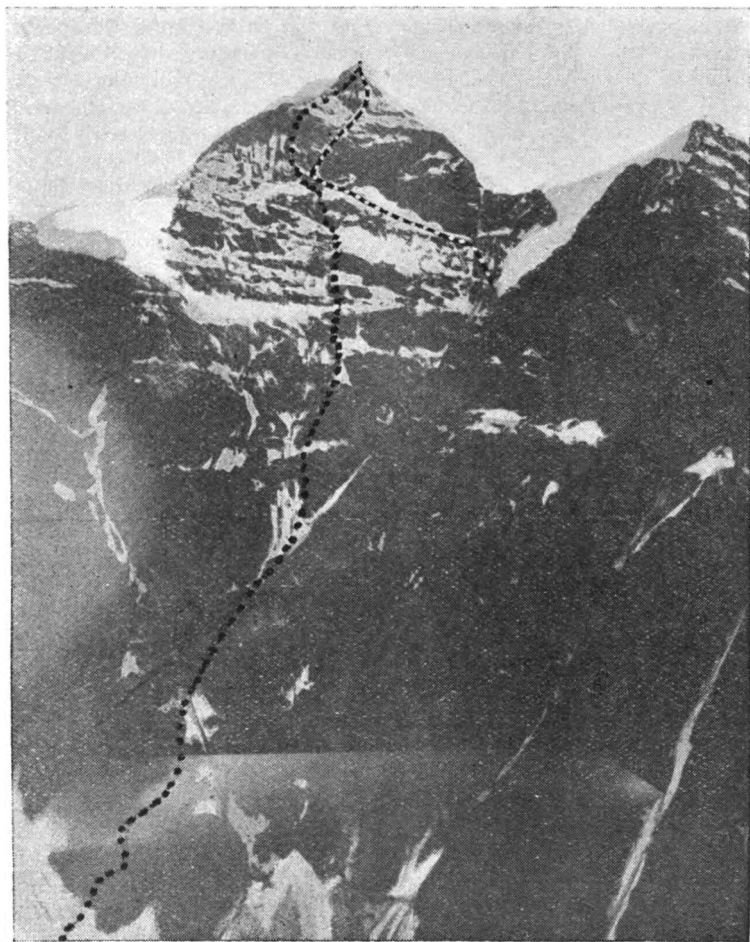


Phot. H. R. Williams.

ON THE AIGUILLE DU CHARDONNET.

Bernese Oberland.

JUNGFRAU, 4166 m. = 13,670 ft. DIRECT ASCENT OF THE S. FACE.
November 6, 1927. Herr Ernst Gertsch with Fritz Fuchs of Wengen.



The line from the base is Herr Gertsch's 1927 route, the other is the possible alternative.

[This is probably the last possible route of the many that have been made up this mountain. The S. face viewed from the Ebnefluh or Gletscherhorn looks prodigious. The possibility of its ascent has only been recently recognized. In 1924 it was proposed to ascend the Rottalsattel couloir as far as the point where it bends

away to the right and from there to traverse out on the S. face of the Jungfrau immediately under the great black cliff which extends right across the upper part of this face and to overcome this cliff at its earliest vulnerable point. This route would be safe, as the couloir in the early morning can be trusted and the great black cliff would protect a party on the traverse. It should not take above 6 to 7 hours. The exposure to stonefall on Herr Gertsch's route would be avoided and the time would be less. Possibly the ascent of the big rock cliff could be made to the E. of the line they followed. A careful examination in 1924 showed a sort of gateway with huge rock gate-posts. This passage should 'go' and not be steep. It is seen on the photograph as a white line, almost under the summit.

The route to be now described is obviously a far finer expedition and lies, from almost the foot of the Rottalsattel couloir, over completely new ground.

I am indebted to my friends Dr. Lauper and Herr Othmar Gurtner for marked photographs, and the latter is kind enough to send me a copy of a letter from Herr Gertsch himself from which the present account is taken.

Herr Gertsch, his brother and Fritz Fuchs are already known by their brilliant ascent in 1926 of the Rotbrett arête ('A.J.' 38, 317-321), while Fuchs is the son of a guide who, in his time, ranked high in the Alpine world. I wonder what the spirit of old Ulrich Lauener says at this overrunning of the stupendous walls of his Rottal!—'A.J.' 30, 315.]

Herr Gertsch's letter reads in rough translation :

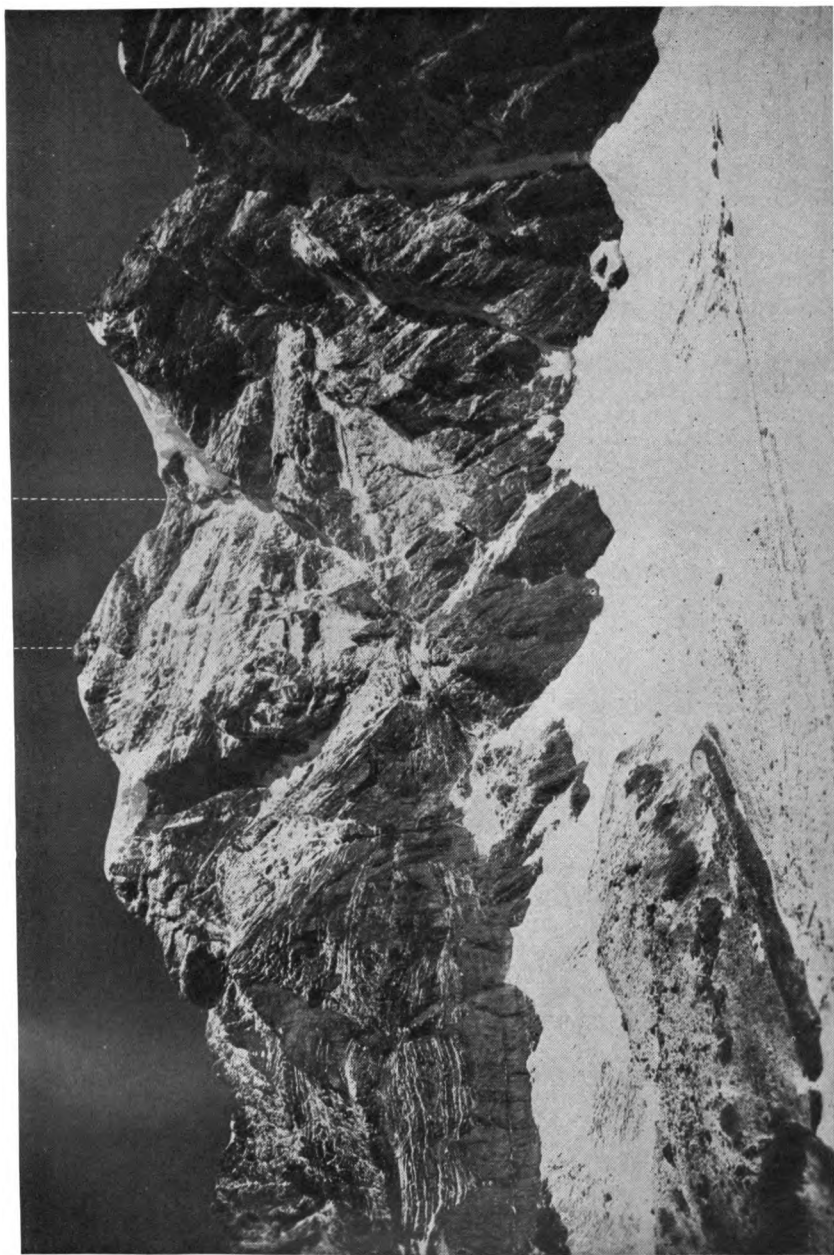
'I had studied the route last spring during a ski tour up the Ebnefluh and formed an idea of its possibility. Fuchs studied the route from the Rottalhorn and thought the same. The splendid weather encouraged us to go up to the Rottal hut, where we arrived at 1 P.M. on November 5. We saw at once that the conditions were the very best. Thanks to the continuous fine weather of the last two weeks, the whole S. face was wonderfully dry, and as the sun was now too weak to melt much snow we saw hardly any of the great icicles which usually hang from the upper rocks. These, in my opinion, form the great danger in summer, inasmuch as the face catches the sun very early and consequently icicles break off all the morning and carry stones with them.

'At this time of year we had nothing to fear from visitors to the Jungfrau who might also throw stones; thus objective dangers could hardly be less. We looked at our route with a Zeiss, and followed next day the selected line with very slight variation.

'The weather was marvellous and the night a regular September one. The morning (November 6) was of rare magnificence, no wind, not cold, not a cloud.

'Too early a start was inadvisable, so we left the hut at 5.45 and at dawn we started up the face W. of the Rottalsattel couloir. The route can be followed on the marked card. We had four bad places

JUNGFRAU ROTTALSATTEL ROTTALHORN



S. FACE OF JUNGFRAU
from Ebnefluh.

Phot. A. Klopfenstein.

to overcome : two over-exposed and very smooth slabs, one a much worn avalanche shoot, and the last and worst a long and very steep chimney with many chock-stones, often loose.

'Already in the early morning falling stones threatened us. We naturally avoided the exposed places as much as possible, but the constant buzzing all day, demanding most sustained attention, was tiring to the nerves.

'We reached the summit at 5.15 just as the sun was setting, and descended to the Jungfrauoch. The expedition is a fine one, but neither of us wants to repeat it. We had, as stated, the best conditions. To show you how fine and warm it was, we never put on gloves until the top of the big chimney half an hour below the top.'

[The vertical height of this face above the foot of the Rottalsattel couloir must approach 1200 metres.]

J. P. F.

FINSTERAARHORN, 4275 m. = 14,026 ft. By the *entire*¹ S.E. arête. August 4, 1927. Herren O. Hug, F. Übersax, O. Schwarz, and R. Wyss.

The arête mounts very steeply from the Gemschlücke (Rothornsattel) in roof-like slabs to the first conspicuous tower, 3597 m., then sinks in a snow slope to a deep gap N.W. of this point. The



O. Hug.]

THE S.E. ARÊTE OF THE FINSTERAARHORN.

ridge now bends over three defined teeth separated by deep notches—the jagged ridge being here some 3800 m. high—then for some 200 m. consists of the upper edge of the corniced snow slope due S. of the Studerjoch stretching downwards to the Studer névé, then suddenly bends upwards abruptly to the first peak,² about 4100 m. The previous routes by the S.E. arête were accomplished by its

¹ There appears to be no record of any *complete* previous traverse of the ridge.—*Editor*.

² Captain Farrar's 'Minor Summit,' *A.J.* 27, 263–300.

W. slope to this snow ridge and fall in with our route at this spot. A very sharp, generally steep and shattered ridge then leads to the base of the well-known slab under the summit. The slab is traversed to the left by a narrow chimney, where there is a fixed rope. The chimney is scaled by its left edge and the summit is attained over a short rock rib, quite easy at its end.

The Gemslücke is best attained by a narrow crack in the slabs somewhat to the right and some 70 ft. high. Next follows a traverse to the left over very narrow ledges, followed by wedging up a crack to the broad slabby crest. The route is now obvious and leads, with the exception of one tooth turned by its E. slope, over the highly interesting but never very difficult crest, some $3\frac{1}{2}$ kilometres long, to the top.

‘Times’ :

Finsteraarhorn Hut	.	.	.	.	dep.	03.00
Gemslücke	.	.	.	.	„	05.00
Point 3597 m.	.	.	.	.	„	07.00
Point before snow ridge	.	.	.	.	„	12.15
‘Vorgipfel’*	.	.	.	.	„	15.15
Summit	.	.	.	.	arr.	17.30

‘Times’ lengthened by much photography, but otherwise fairly quick.

(From *Die Alpen*, 1928, pp. 55–56, and communication from Dr. Hug.)

Lepontine Alps.

HÜLLEHORN, 3175 m. = 10,427 ft. By the W. face. May 27, 1927. Count A. Bonacossa alone. From Heiligkreuz (Binn) follow the route of the Passo di Boccareccio (Ritterpass) to the base of the great snow couloir descending from the N. arête of the Hüllehorn between the summit and point 2945 m. Mount this couloir with ease, but some risk from falling stones and ice; high up, bear left-handed before attaining the watershed and attain the summit over steep slopes and the Hülle Glacier (3 hrs. from the Kummeglen). Descent by the Hüllejoch to Berisal.

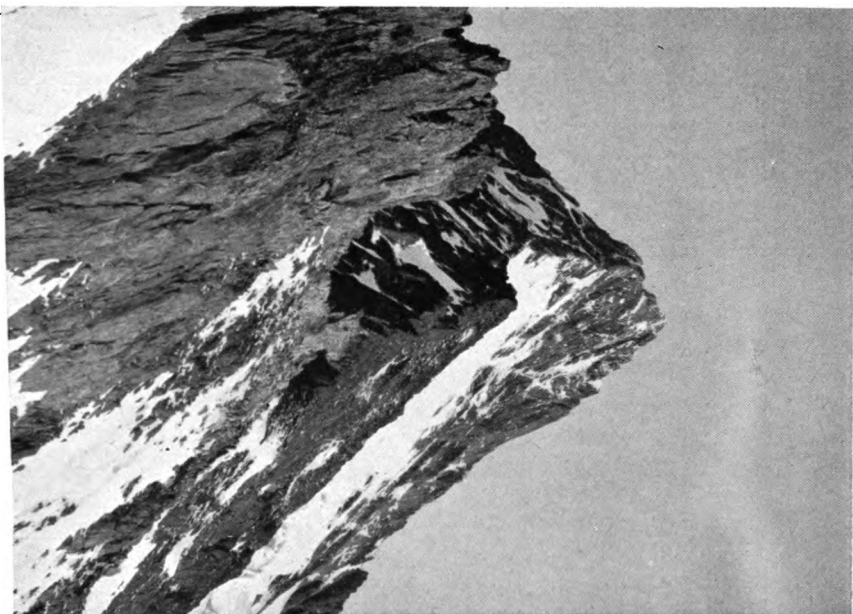
The route is well shown in the photo, ‘R.M.’ 1899, p. 124.

MONTE LEONE, 3561 m. = 11,683 ft. By the N.N.W. face direct from the Kaltwasser Glacier. May 29, 1927. H.R.H. the Duke of Apulia and Count A. Bonacossa. From the Kaltwasser Glacier (start from Hôtel Belvedere) the party mounted direct to the summit by snow slopes—very steep high up and bad snow—in 2 hrs. from the troublesome bergschrund. Descent in dense fog by the Alpenpass.

Hitherto the ascent has always been made by the route described in *Alpes Valaisannes*, iv. 15, which is far easier. ‘Our route is

Phot. O. Hug.

POINT "D."



Phot. O. Hug.

NEAR POINT "A."

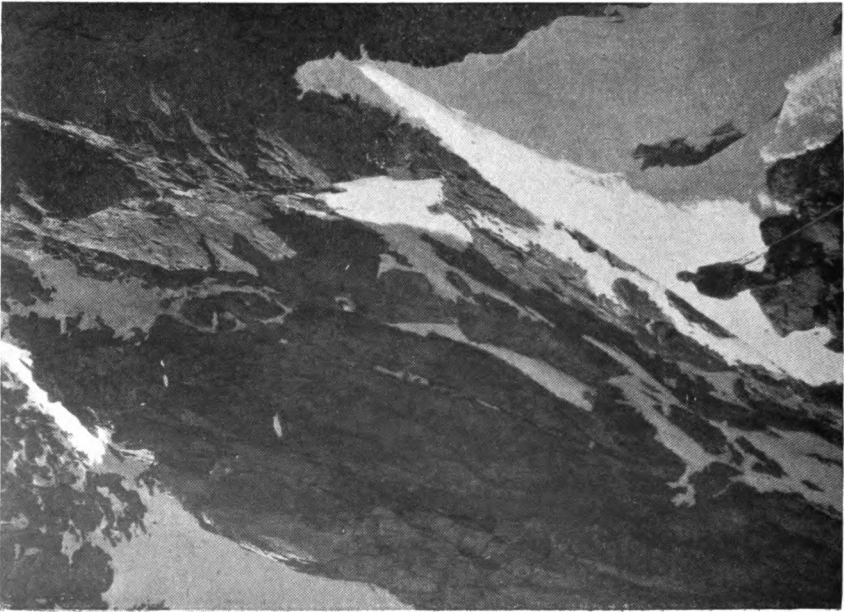
View from "minor summit" towards summit.





Phot. O. Hug.

S.E. SLOPE OF FINSTERAARHORN
from upper N.E. arête of Studerhorn.



Phot. O. Hug.

POINT "N."
The "slab" and chimney under the summit.

probably like yours up the Ferro Orientale [Piz Qualivo] by the N. face, compared with Klucker's route.' [See 'A.J.' 28, 394-6, and *Climbers' Guide*, Bernina, i. 118-9.]

BORTELHORN (Punta del Ressio), 3204 m. = 10,512 ft. By the N. face and N.W. arête. July 4, 1927. Count A. Bonacossa alone. From Berisal by the Steinenthal and glacier to the foot of the N. face (4 hrs., including halts). Bergschrund easy and good snow; kept to the right side, W., of the slope. A rocky rampart gave some trouble, but above the snow was once more excellent. N.W. arête struck very high up, but it would have been better to stick to the face as far as the summit, bearing left, E. (1 hr. 55 mins., including halts). Descent to Berisal in 2 hrs. 10 mins.

'This is the best snow expedition between Simplon and Gotthard, but should be attempted only with good conditions.'

A. B.

Bernina (W. Wing) Group.

CIMA DI VAZZEDA,¹ 3302 m. = 10,833 ft. By the N.W. face and S.W. arête. June 26, 1927. Count A. Bonacossa and Signor P. Orio. From the Forno Club hut follow the route of the Passo di Vazzeda to the base of the lowest depression between the Cime di Vazzeda and Rosso (1 hr.). Great bergschrund easily crossed and then a very steep snowy slope, about 150 ft. high, is mounted, followed by a rib descending from a point S.W. of summit of Vazzeda (rib exactly shown on sketch, p. 13, of S.A.C. *Guide*). Climb the easy rocks of this rib, turning the above-named point either by the Forno, N.W., slope, by rotten rocks, or passing over it. The summit is then easily attained (3¼ hrs., very slow). There is some risk of falling stones and ice in the short stretch between the bergschrund and the rib.

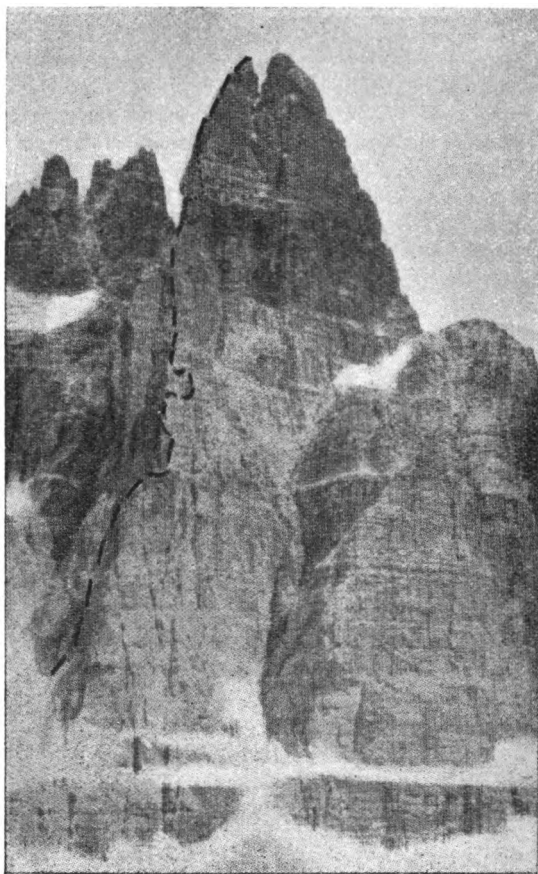
A. B.

Brenta Group.

CAMPANILE ALTO, 2937 m. = 9636 ft., D.u.Æ. A.-V. map. By the W. arête. August 8, 1927. Herren H. Hartmann and G. von Kraus. The climb begins to the left, N., of the base of the W. arête (more properly the 'edge' of a face). The smooth rampart forming the base is climbed over a step of some 100 ft., followed by a difficult traverse to the left, N., then straight up, close to the 'edge,' by a very hard crack some 130 ft. high, thus reaching a kind of gap. Next, by a difficult upwards-slanting traverse, attain an overhanging chimney to the right, which is climbed to a platform. The next step on the 'edge' is attained by a series of easier little chimneys. This and the third steps are overcome by keeping

¹ Height taken from new S. map (1927).

close to the crest ; the fourth and overhanging step, visible from Val Brenta, is climbed by a chimney falling away to the left and leading upwards to a gap in the 'edge.' Follow the crest for some



Photo, A.A.V.M.]

CAMPANILE ALTO.

With 1927 route.

200 ft., smooth firm rocks, to a yellow wall. Climb this by an awkward diagonal crack and a short grey chimney to the left, then back again on to the crest, which is followed till close under the summit ; this latter is attained over a friable rock wall, followed by a short chimney (6 hrs.). The height of the 'arête' is some 2000 ft. (From *Jahresbericht des A.A.V.*, München, 1926-27, pp. 37-8.)

Norway.

(See, in general, the late Mr. Bicknell's paper, 'A.J.' 34, 18-33.)
STORE AUSTABOTTIND, 2203 m. = 7228 ft. By the S. arête direct from the Gravdals Glacier. July 31, 1927. Messrs. Ola Furuseth, Asbjörn Gunneng, and Boye Schlytter.

The summit was first climbed in 1883 by Carl Hall with Soggemoen by the N.W. ridge from Berdalen. This route, which is relatively easy, has since been repeated by several parties. Last summer the above party succeeded in making a new route and ascended direct to the summit from the Gravdals Glacier. The S. face, about 1000 ft. high, consists of a very steep rock wall with two steep arêtes on each side, one going up from the Gravdals Glacier and the other from the Ravnskar.

Leaving Turtagrö at 07.00 the party, going up the Riingsdal, crossed the Riings Glacier, stepped down to the Gravdals Glacier and crossed same, arriving at the foot of the S. face at 12.30. The foot of the arête was easily gained from the W. side, and after a short halt they began the ascent at 13.00. One climbs at first straight up on the edge for about $1\frac{1}{2}$ hrs. on solid rocks with good holds. On meeting here an extremely steep wall, about 20 m. high, which could not be forced, they were compelled to *descend* to the left (W.) a narrow crack of 8 m., which was followed by a horizontal traverse of about 80 m. to the bottom of a chimney about 50 m. high with a difficult overhang in the middle of it. Before reaching the bottom of this chimney two fruitless attempts were made straight up to get on to the edge. From the top of the chimney, on steep rock by gullies and slabs about 90 m. to the N.E., and one arrives again on the edge, which is followed until stopped by a second impassable rock wall much higher than the former and well seen from the Gravdals Glacier on account of its steepness and grey colour. Then climbing on the left a high slab and a steep chimney, one arrives once again on the edge, which is followed to the top without further trouble. The summit was reached at 19.00.

After a $\frac{3}{4}$ -hr. halt the descent began and was made by the ordinary route along the ridge to Berdalen, and Turtagrö was reached at 24.00.

STORE SKAGASTÖLSTIND, 2404 m. = 7887 ft. By the S. face direct from the Slingsby Glacier. August 4, 1927. Messrs. Ola Furuseth, Asbjörn Gunneng, and Boye Schlytter.

The summit, which is the highest in the Horungtinder, was first climbed in 1876 by Mr. W. C. Slingsby by the ridge from Mohns Skar. Since then several new routes have been made, and last summer the above party climbed direct to the top from the Slingsby Glacier. The S. face, about 1000 ft. high, consists of an extremely steep rock wall with some parallel chimneys running from the base just to the top.

The party started from Turtagrö and on account of uncertain

weather did not get off before 10.00. After a short halt at the hut on the Skagastöls Bandet the Slingsby Glacier was crossed. Despite some huge crevasses the foot of the mountain was reached with only small deviations from the straight course, 15.00. The crossing of the bergschrund at the foot of the wall where two well-defined parallel chimneys descend did not give trouble. Up the chimney to the left and then traverse to the right one, which is followed for some 30 m.; the chimney then curves back steeply to the left towards a large platform. The climbing is rather exposed and extremely steep, but the rock is dry and sound. The leader wore rubber shoes, and the sack and axes had to be hauled up some places.

The chimney to the right is then taken again, a horizontal traverse of 50 m. follows, and, rounding a sharp corner, a couloir at the base of an overhang is gained. Up by the rocks of its left bank and by an exposed climb a wide gully is reached, with a few rope-lengths of easy climbing which allowed rapid progress. One leaves the gully, and, after severe and steep climbing upwards to the right, one attains the foot of a chimney which leads by an exposed climb to the summit, reached at 21.30.

The descent began after $\frac{1}{4}$ hr.'s halt by the ordinary way, arriving at the Skagastöls hut at 23.00.

BOYE SCHLYTTER.

Corsica.

THE mountains of Corsica are divided into three separate groups of different height and extent :

(1) The *Monte Cinto Group*, of by far the greatest extent. It lies to the N.W. of the island and more nearly resembles the Alps. Monte Cinto (2710 m.) is the highest peak.

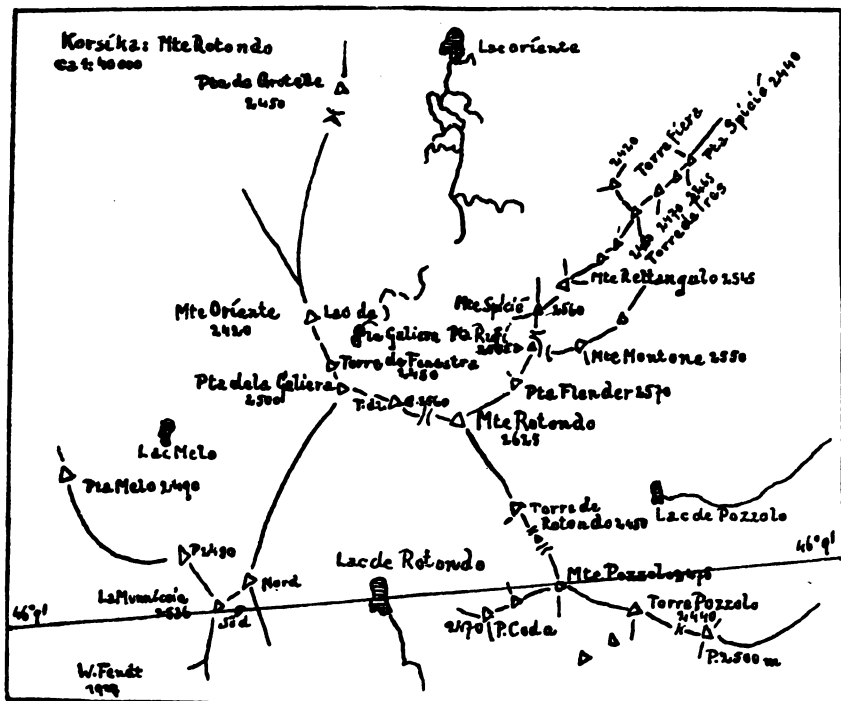
(2) The *Rotondo Group* is smaller in extent than the former, but appears to have been little explored. At all events we found practically nothing about it in writing. The Rotondo Group lies in the centre of the island and is fairly easily reached from Corte. The highest peak is Monte Rotondo (2625 m.)—a well-known viewpoint. The principal feature of the group is the number of lonely corries, nearly all of which contain wonderful little mountain lakes.

(3) The *Monte Oro Group*. This lies to the S. of the Rotondo, separated from that group by the Col de Vizzavona.

We left Corte on August 12, 1927, and reached Timozzo after a 4-hrs.' march. Thence, passing the fountain of Triggione, we pitched our tent on the shore of Lake Oriente, or Rotondo, according to the natives, the real Rotondo Lake being at the foot of the S. face of Monte Rotondo.

The weather was mostly fine : only at the end of our stay did we have a tremendous storm. This storm kept the temperature very low.

A sketch map is included of the group, because the French *État Major* map is rather inaccurate, the heights and positions of the ridges being often wrong.



CAPO DE GROTELLE, 2450 m. August 15, 1927. Same party. From the Oriente tarn go up the slopes to the W. to the ridge and along this to the top. Descent to the S.W. over a steep ledge and at its end descend *en rappel* over a rock rampart.

LA MONICCIA, 2536 m. Same date and party. From a spot level with the N. buttress of the peak and the glen to its W., steer along under its broken rocks to the S. for 3 hrs. to the gap between Point 2280 m. and La Moniccia. Now follow the ridge; climb over a loose boulder on the crest to a small gap, turn on to the S. face

and thus attain the S. summit. Continue along the crest over a deep gap to the N. summit, attained by a crack.

PUNTA MELLO, 2490 m. An excrescence on the ridge extending N.W. from La Moniccia and Point 2280 m. Same date and party. Easily attained over its shattered S. flank. It affords a wonderful view over the unknown W. group.

PUNTA ORIENTE, 2420 m. August 16, 1927. Herr A. Buckel. From the Oriente tarn follow route of Monte Rotondo (1 hr.), then to the W. above the tarn to a narrow gap, then over steep slabs to the top.

PUNTA DI FINESTRA, 2450 m. August 17, 1927. The same. From the gap mentioned above S. of Punta Oriente, turn a tooth, then up a chimney to the ridge and over this to the top.

MONTE ROTONDO, 2625 m. Direct ascent of the N.W. face. August 13, 1927. Herren W. Fendt, H. Lampsberger, and P. Klein. From a point one-third of the height of the gully leading to the Rotondo gap, attain a crack seaming a great smooth slab and extending right up the face. The crack is left several times right or left to turn overhangs. The last difficulty is a chock-stone turned on the left. The rest is easy, the ridge being reached close to the top (2½ hrs.).

MONTE SPICIÉ, 2560 m. Same date and party. From the gap between our summit and Punta Rufi descend on to the E. slope and climb a chimney. After a step of 20 ft., attain the summit from the E. by a gully. Descent by the N. arête towards the gap leading to Monte Rettangolo (2½ hrs.).

PUNTA RUFÍ, 2535 m. Same date and party. From Punta Flender follow the S. arête for three-quarters of its length. Turn a gap to the E. and climb this face to the top. Descent to the N. mostly *en rappel*.

MONTE MENTONE, 2550 m. Same date and party. The ascent and descent both taken over the S.W. rib and S. face (2¾ hrs.).

MONTE RETTANGULO, 2545 m. Same date and party. Go astride of the smooth S. arête to the top (1 hr.).

TORRE DE TRES, 2465 m., 2470 m., 2460 m. August 14, 1927. Same party. The highest point is in the middle and separated from the others by deep gaps. Traverse the sky-line from end to end, descending the last step on the S. *en rappel*.

TORRE FIERA, 2420 m. Same date and party. Climb up from the S. to the gap between the summit and Torre de Tres. Now follow an exposed ledge to the right to a shallow crack, mount this and attain a chimney to the left, whence the double-toothed summit is attained (3 hrs. from the gap).

MONTE POZZOLO, 2475 m. August 15, 1927. Same party. Go up a convenient cleft on the S.W. slope and follow it round to the S. to a platform against the summit (1¾ hr.).

POINT 2500 m. Same date and party. This is the finest point to the S.E. of Monte Rotondo. Go up a débris-filled couloir leading

to the gap between the summit and Torre de Pozzolo. From the gap—reached with difficulty high up—turn on to the W. arête and, sometimes by its N. slope, attain the summit. Descent over débris-strewn slabs towards the S. till level with the gap, which is then easily attained over a ledge (3 hrs.).

TORRE POZZOLO, 2440 m. Same date and party. From a gap to the E. descend a few feet to the S. to a snow-patch by which the arête is reached. Go over this ridge to a rope's-length under the summit, attained with difficulty from the N. (1 hr.).

PUNTA CODA, 2470 m. Same date and party. Go up the farthest N. chimney till the middle of the face, then take a chimney to the left and over this and a step attain the summit (2 hrs.).

TORRE DE ROTONDO, 2450 m. Same date and party. By the S. arête and its E. slope, followed by a gap to a crumbling wall. Then over a terrace and a crack to the top (1½ hr.).

MONTE SPICIÉ, 2560 m. By the N.W. face. August 18, 1927. Herr W. Fendt. Attain a conspicuous snow-patch under the 650-ft. high face, and by this and small steps, turned to right or left, attain the summit. Descent by the W. arête; a *rappel* is needed for the descent of a 30–40-ft. overhang (1½ hr.).

Although these Corsican peaks cannot be compared to the Alps, yet the beauty and loneliness of the region, as well as the charm of the climbs, will appeal to any visitor desirous of quiet combined with scenery.

WILHELM FENDT,
A.A.V.M.

VARIOUS EXPEDITIONS.

Bernese Oberland.

JUNGFRAU, 4166 m. = 13,670 ft. By the N.E. arête. September 6, 1927. Mr. R. L. M. Underhill, with Adolf Rubi, one of the young Grindelwald guides, made the third ascent of this fine ridge (first ascent,¹ cf. 'A.J.' 26, 344–5; second ascent, 'A.J.' 35, 169–171). Following a week of perfect weather there had been a storm on the 4th and morning of the 5th; conditions were not good.

The ascent of the very difficult first gendarme was exactly like that described in the account of the first traverse of the ridge, with the addition that the steep climb at the end of the delicate ice traverse out upon the N. face was up rocks set in ice and sprinkled

¹ The first traverse, taken in the *descent*, was accomplished on September 2, 1903, by Mr. C. F. Meade, with Ulrich and Heinrich Fuhrer (*A.J.* 21, 559; 22, 566–72).

with snow. Rubi, in a splendid effort, eventually mastered this step, much the hardest of the whole climb, by the adroit use of an ice-axe hold. The abominably loose rock dwelt upon in the account of the second ascent was not in evidence, due very likely to the ice consolidation.

Beyond this gendarme the party kept strictly to the ridge, as powdery snow made any traverse out upon the N. face unsafe. At two points a human ladder was necessary. The climbing up to the 'secondary summit' was in the main rock work of a high degree of interest, though one snow-covered gendarme, of wicked appearance but little power of real resistance, remains in memory. There were no serious difficulties upon this stretch.

After the secondary summit sections of icy corniche began to appear, and had to be traversed, as untrustworthy snow forbade any descent upon the N. face. These sections, interpolated between gendarmes, were however regularly short, and one of the party could always be anchored on rock. There followed more fine rock work, ending in the tall smooth-faced gendarme emphasized in the preceding accounts. The ascent of this, an affair of delicate face-climbing upon small but adequate holds, was rendered difficult by a band of ice across its middle; Rubi's work in passing over from the small rock-holds into ice-steps, and again on to the rock face, was of a very high order. From the Wengern Jungfrau a broad snow-ridge, followed by easy rocks, leads to the summit.

Left Jungfraujoch 05.00, Point 3788 m. about 08.00, summit 13.25. This rapid time was due chiefly to the fact that, owing to the constant threat of bad weather (clouds settled down during the ascent of the first gendarme, and light snow fell from time to time later on), the party pushed regularly ahead, making but one halt (of 5 mins.) at Point 3788 m.

This splendid ridge deserves far more attention. After the first gendarme the rock improves rapidly, eventually becoming unimpeachable. The climb is of unfailing interest and better, it was thought, than, for instance, the *Schalligrat* or *Viereselsgrat*. If really caught by bad weather a party can descend in a couple of places to the Jungfraufrirn, and the brief return from the summit to the Jungfraujoch by the ordinary route always holds out the prospect of an easy finish.

Norway.

KJÆRRINGA from Maradalsskar. August 5, 1927. Messrs. Ola Furuseth, Asbjörn Gunneng, and Boye Schlytter.

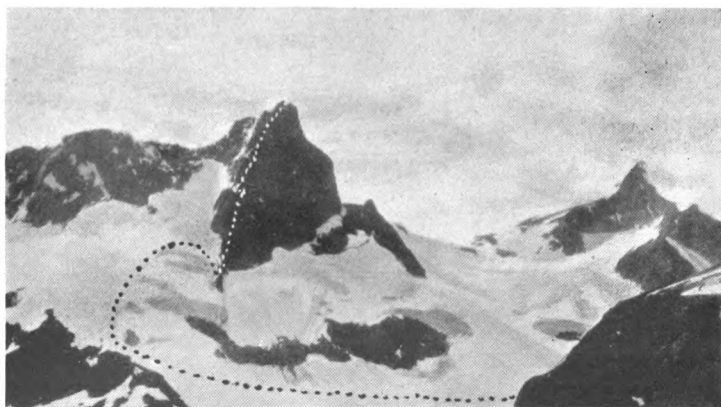
This route was first climbed in 1908 by F. Schjelderup, with Knut and Arne Fortun, and has since not been repeated until last summer. The height of the rock wall from the Maradalsskar to the summit is only about 350 ft., but the wall is extremely steep.

The party left the Skagastölshut at 05.30, descended to the Midtmaradal and reached the Maradalsskar after 3½ hrs.' walk.



Phot. A. Gunneng.

KJÆRRINGA
from Maradalsskar.



Phot. H. Tonsberg.

STORE AUSTABOTTIND
from Gravdals Glacier.



Phot. P. K. Murray.

STORE SKAGASTÖLSTIND
from Slingsby Glacier.



Phot. A. Gunneng.

STORE SKAGASTÖLSTIND, S. FACE,
from Slingsby Glacier.

The climb up the wall is very severe on account of its steepness, and also partly owing to the rock in some places being dangerously loose. The climb is considered the most difficult one in the Horungtinder.

The summit was reached at 15.00 after 3½ hrs.' climb from the gap. Descent was made on the opposite side by Jernskarrenden to Midtmaradal, up to the Skagastölshut, and Turtagrö was reached at 19.00.

BOYE SCHLYTTER.

ALPINE NOTES.

THE ALPINE CLUB OBITUARY :	Date of Election
Crossman, A.	1871
Wainwright, J. H.	1875
Bainbridge-Bell, Rev. F. C.	1889
Mumm, A. L.	1889
Tribe, Wilberforce N.	1891
Monro, Rev. C. G.	1892
Neame, G. H.	1903

BOW LAKE (*see frontispiece*) in the Rocky Mountains of Canada forms the most northerly Continental Divide source of the South Saskatchewan River. Well stocked with trout, the lake is frequented by travellers *en route* to the Freshfield, Lyell and Columbia Icefields. The foreground shows the stream from Bow Pass entering the lake, the adjacent meadows forming a delightful camping ground which may be reached in a day and a half, with horses, from Lake Louise. The mountain wall in the background supports the Crowfoot glacier, and mountaineers, in a single day, can climb from the lake, traverse the expanses of the Waputik Icefield and descend to the camps in Yoho valley.

The illustration is from the painting by Carl Rungius, well known for his Canadian landscapes and studies of big game. It is copyrighted by Harper & Brothers and reprinted with their permission.

We express our warm thanks to Dr. J. Monroe Thorington for generously presenting the print to the ALPINE JOURNAL.—*Editor*.

AN ITALIAN COMMISSION ON THE DIVISION OF THE ALPS.—A new arrangement of the Alps in a series of arbitrary regions and districts is the subject of the report of a military commission, appointed in 1924 by the President of the Italian Geographical Society, which has been recently analyzed and commented on by Mr. Douglas Freshfield in the January number of the 'Geographical Journal.' Such an arrangement, it is obvious, would, if it met with general acceptance, be of great value to writers on Alpine science as well as to travellers and handbook compilers. Mr. Freshfield

describes the governing principle adopted by the Italian Commission as sound and practical. 'It has,' he writes, 'set aside arguments based on racial or linguistic considerations, or on geological, botanical or climatic conditions. It has altogether ignored political frontiers. It has preferred to look on the Alps as from an aeroplane with a single eye to their Surface Relief.'

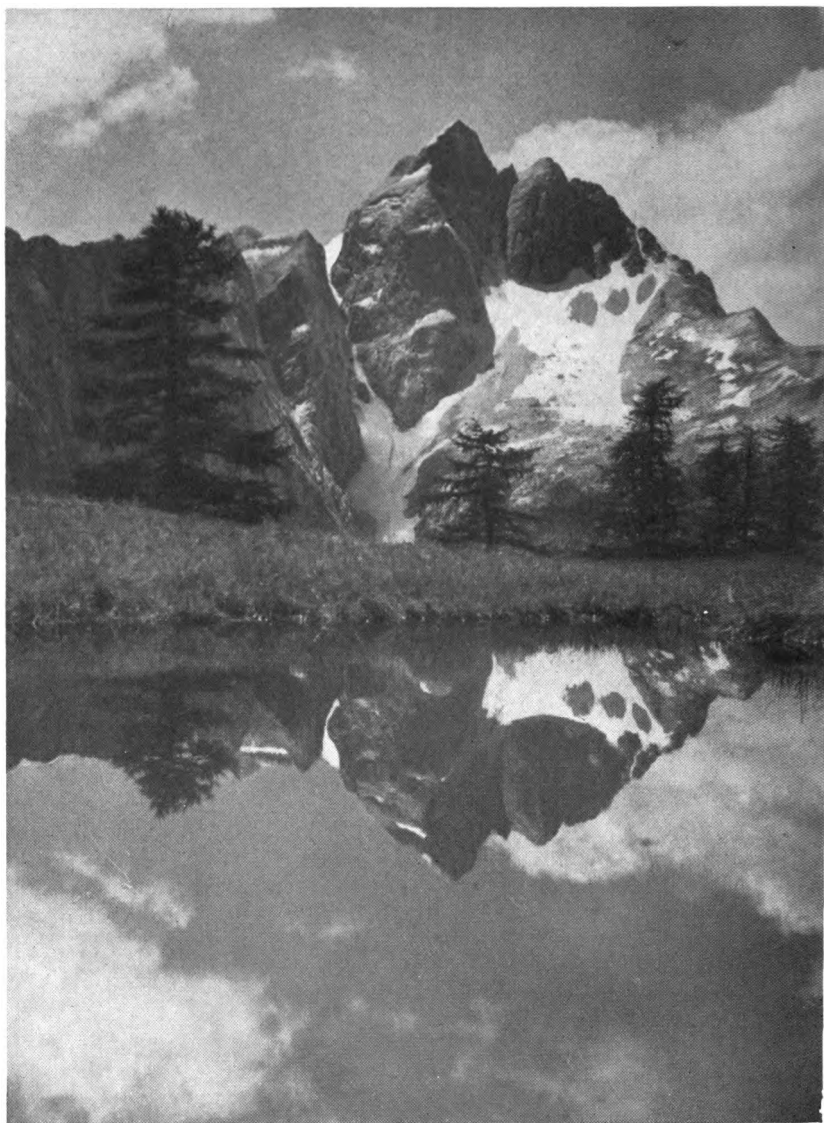
The Commission accepts the division of the Alpine chain into three main regions, but it differs from previous geographers in fixing their limits. Thus the line between the Alps and Apennines is drawn at the Col di Cadibona (sometimes called the Col d'Altare) behind Savona. Again, a boundary between the Western and Central Alps is found in the Val d'Aosta and the Petit Ferret; that between the Central and Eastern Alps is furnished by the lower Adige Valley, the Brenner Pass and the valley of the Inn. The former Mr. Freshfield accepts, but he points out that the latter would take away from the Eastern Alps not only (as Mr. Ball has done) the Ortler, Brenta and Adamello Groups, but also the essentially Tyrolese Eitzthaler and Stubai Farn. This he disapproves and, fortified by Mr. Coolidge's authority, he proposes as an alternative a line running past Lago d'Iseo up Val Camonica and over the Aprica and Umbrail Passes to the Reschen Scheideck and the Inn Valley and Arlberg.

As regards districts the proposals of the Commission are to a large extent accepted by their critic. Those who care to follow them in detail may be referred to the 'Geographical Journal,' where they are set out in full with the help of a map; here we confine ourselves to indicating the main points in which Mr. Freshfield questions the conclusions of the Commission. He resents the transfer of Mont Blanc to the Graian Alps, and suggests that it should be allowed the dignity of a separate district with the Petit St. Bernard and Petit Ferret as its boundaries.

The 'Rhaetian Alps' of the Commission extend from the Splügen and the Oberalp up to the Brenner, with for their limits 'on the south the Adda, the Aprica Pass, the Oglio, the Croce Domini Pass, the Chiese, Lago di Ledro, head of Lago di Garda, gap of Loppio; to the east the Adige, the Isacco (Eisack), the Brenner road; to the north and west the Inn, the Arlberg Pass, the Rhein, and the Hinter Rhein.'

This comprehensive medley of distinct and incongruous groups is characterized by Mr. Freshfield as inadmissible. The Albula and Silvretta-Rhätikon should, he holds, form one district as the Rhaetian Alps; the Bernina another; the Ortler, Eitzthaler and Stubai Farn might well be united under the title of the Tyrolese Alps. The Adamello Group should include the Brenta. Thus, according to the division into regions already proposed, the Ortler and Adamello would be restored to the Eastern Alps, with which (except in the pages of the 'Alpine Guide') they have been generally associated.

CARTES DU MASSIF DU MONT BLANC par Henri, Joseph et Charles Vallot.—These maps of Mont Blanc begun by Henri and



Phot. E. Planinšek.

JALOVEC FROM N.W.
(The modern route is up rock-buttress to left of couloir.)

Joseph Vallot, continued, edited and published by Charles Vallot, include :

(1) One map on a scale of 1 : 20,000 in 3 colours with contours at 20 m. intervals, containing 13 sheets. Of these sheets the following have now been published: 'Chamonix' (provisional), 'Le Tour,' 'Argentière,' 'Talèfre' (permanent). The next sheet will be 'Le Tacul.'

(2) One general map on a scale of 1 : 50,000 in 4 sheets issued in 3 colours with contours at 40 m., *including* the Swiss and Italian portions of the Chain. The N.E. portion will be published in June 1928.

(3) One general map on a scale of 1 : 100,000 in 1 sheet, 3 colours with contours at 40 m. *In preparation.*

(4) One general map on a scale of 1 : 200,000, 1 sheet in 3 colours with 'pencil' relief. Issued in 1927.

This great map, long eagerly awaited, is to be used always conjointly with the Guide Vallot. The two works are to be considered as one, and each supplements the other.

As a mark of affection for our former Ally and of respect for himself, His Imperial Highness PRINCE CHICHIBU OF JAPAN has been elected an Honorary Member of the Alpine Club.

SIR MARTIN CONWAY (President 1902-4), SIR FELIX SCHUSTER (Vice-President 1899-1901), and MR. GEORGE YELD (Vice-President 1915-17) have all completed 50 years' membership of the Alpine Club.

THE 1927 SEASON IN THE JULIAN ALPS.—Mrs. Copeland writes : 'The season was exceptionally fine and dry, with the result that many successful expeditions were recorded. There were several first ascents of difficult "walls," notably on the N. face of the JALOVEC [Jalouz], ŠKRLATICA, TRAVNIK, MOISTROVKA, "Devil's Ledges" (ŠPIK), and in the TRIGLAV massif. All go to the credit of native climbers, above all to Dr. Stanko Tominšek, Mr. Jože Čop, Mr. Martelanc, Miss Pavla Jesih, Messrs. Prevec and Hudnik, Mr. Miha Potočnik. Important, chiefly, because of its associations is the successful ascent of Triglav N. face by the diagonal route which Dr. Klement Jug was attempting when he lost his life. Dr. Tominšek and Jože Čop accomplished its first ascent and then—independently—Messrs. Hudnik and Prevec.

'I enjoyed several good climbs this year. Jože Čop even took me up a new route up the Moistrovka wall. It was only a 4 hours' climb, so that there was time for me to do my own work throughout. My last trip was over the MARTULJEK. The first snow had fallen, and when we were near the ridge our party (we were three) got into difficulties owing to ice, for which we were insufficiently equipped. So we had to take to the rock and had 4 hours' icy climbing in a fairly strong N. wind. Under ordinary circumstances that trip is easy and one of the most picturesque we have.

'Dr. Friedrich Kroeber, of Halberstadt, a German climber with thirty years' experience of mountaineering in Switzerland, had come

for a first visit to the Julian Alps, being prompted to this by Dr. Kugy's lectures and book (*Aus dem Leben eines Bergsteigers*). He enjoyed several successful trips. The last of these expeditions was an ascent of the Jalovec by way of the ridge (July 17), when he joined a party of members of the mountaineering club *Skala*. Two days later he fell and was killed on an ascent of Mt. PRISOINIK by the new rock route. Dr. Kroeber was alone on this trip, and the exact cause of the accident will never be known.

'There was a sensational rescue in the Triglav range early in the year, when two students who had gone off for a few days' ski-running got snow-bound and very nearly died of starvation. They were found by a search party from Bohinj, when they were at the last gasp, and that they were found at all was due to the merest chance.

'Another brave rescue was achieved when Miss Jesih and Mr. T. Guera climbing the N. face of the Špik in July were fog-bound on the "wall" for 36 hours, and Mr. Guera was overcome by cramp. Miss Jesih gained the top of the great chimney alone, when she was met by Jože Čop (who had in the meantime reached the summit by the ridge), and the two between them hauled up Mr. Guera.'

There are no true professional guides in the Julian Alps. During the Austrian régime a certain number existed, but all these were killed or incapacitated during the war. Mr. JOŽE ČOP, a distinguished local mountaineer, is willing to act as *professional* companion to any British parties visiting the district, while the hunter, MIHA OJTZL, in Kranjska Gora, is stated to be a reliable mountaineer.

The AKADEMISCHER ALPENKLUB, BERNE, has courteously informed the A.C. that its members will be admitted to the A.A.C.B.'s huts, i.e. the Engelhorn and Bietschhorn, with the same privileges as accorded to its own and S.A.C. members. The charge for spending the night amounts to 1 franc. The Alpine Club much appreciates the favour. Herr Oesterle remains President of the A.A.C.B., while Herr H. Bürgi replaces Herr Amstutz as *Hüttenchef*.

We regret to learn of the death of Monsieur FELIX PERRIN, the distinguished French mountaineer. M. Perrin will be remembered as the last surviving member of the famous trio, Mr. Coolidge and Capitaine Henri Duhamel, joint authors of the classic *Guide du Haut Dauphiné* (1890) and *The Central Alps of the Dauphiny* (2 editions, 1892 and 1905). M. Perrin was, of course, intimately connected with Mr. Coolidge as regards the publishing and editing of *Josias Simler et les origines de l'Alpinisme jusqu'en 1600* (1904).

The death is announced of Dr. KARL DIENER as having occurred on January 6 last. Dr. Diener (Hon. Member A.C. 1911-16) was Professor in the University of Vienna and a very well-known mountaineer and writer. We hear of his death with regret.

CAPTAIN J. P. FARRAR has been elected an Honorary Member of the American Alpine Club.

'CHARMOZ AND GRÉPON.'—In the charming obituary of the late Miss Katherine Richardson by her great friend Mademoiselle Mary Paillon, *La Montagne*, 1927, pp. 326–34, it appears that on August 15, 1888, Miss Richardson, with Emile Rey and J. B. Bich, accomplished the first 'lady' traverse of the Aiguille des Grands Charmoz. Mademoiselle Paillon kindly informs us that Miss Richardson's notes read as follows: 'Aiguille des Charmoz, première traversée féminine des 5 pointes, pointe Nord-Ouest 3443·8, Pointe Sud 3444·5' [3444 m. is the Vallot height of *le Bâton Wicks*, 3445 m. is the Vallot height of the highest point]. It would appear, consequently, that the expedition was a N.-S. traverse. On the other hand, M. Maurice Paillon's son remembers perfectly Miss Richardson telling him that the traverse was made 'in the opposite to the usual way,' from which it might have been from S.-N.

The matter is of small importance, but should be noted in connexion with Sir George Morse's paper, 'A.J.' 39, 251, in which the statement about 'the first traverse by ladies' should be modified accordingly.

THE ITALIAN 'ADULA' FRONTIER.—In connexion with the numerous new reservoirs that are being made on the Italian side to develop electric power, a number of excellent paths have been made. They start well, but are very apt to lead the climber astray, especially by lantern light.

Rough quarters and some food can be had at the house by the dam at the end of the Vannino Lake. There is no intention of making it an inn, and possibly this may cease when the workmen have left. The OFENHORN is climbed easily from here or taken on the way to the new Italian hut on the 'Gemsland' alp about one mile from the snout of the Hohsands Glacier on the left bank of the stream. This new hut, the 'Citta di Busto' (caretaker), will be convenient for the peaks at the head of the Hohsands Glacier.

The new ADULA HUT (S.A.C.) on the Piotta Pass is *bewirtshaftet*. The U.T.O.E. Hut is about one hour higher up on the way to the RHEINWALDHORN. A comfortable one-room hut. Not provisioned and no wood.

H. E. NEWTON.

Sir George H. Morse, President A.C., has very kindly presented a *Lettre de M. Bourrit sur le premier voyage fait au sommet du Mont Blanc* (see 'Annals of Mont Blanc,' C. E. Mathews, p. 98). This letter contains the first printed account of the first ascent, 1786. There are only two other copies in existence, one of which is in the Library, Geneva, the other being in the possession of the de Saussure family. (See Mr. H. F. Montagnier's 'Bibliography of the Ascents of Mont Blanc,' 'A.J.' 25, 608–40.)

An attempt was made on the N. arête of the AIGUILLE NOIRE DE PÉTÉRET, July 31, 1927, by Herren E. Allwein and F. Gäbler. The party attained with much difficulty (3 hrs. from the Fresnay Glacier

bergschrand) the gap ¹ between the Dames Anglaises, *Punta Jolanda*, and the Aiguille Noire, *i.e.* Kurz's Brèche Sud des Dames Anglaises, *ca.* 3500 m. Thence *descending* on the E. slope, a traverse was made on to the Aiguille Noire's N.E. face in the hope of being able, by this face, to attain the middle of the N. arête near the flattish step. The party, having overcome great difficulties and a certain height, were forced to return by the same route. Another attempt was made on the same day by an unnamed Austrian party; this latter endeavoured, from the Brèche, to follow the crest of the arête, which proved quite impracticable. *Jahresbericht des A. A. V., München*, 1926-7, pp. 38, 44.

THE BRÈCHE CENTRALE DES DAMES ANGLAISES, *i.e.* the gap between l'Isolée and the Aiguille Blanche de Pétérét ('A.J.' 39, 336, footnote 3), was first attained from the Fresnay side, July 22, 1913, by Signori G. B. Gugliermi, G. Lampugnani, F. Ravelli and A. Zanutti ('A.J.' 28, 82-3; Kurz, 1927, p. 351), and has subsequently been reached from the Fresnay side by at least one French party.

A. BONACOSSA.

Dr. W. von Kehl sends the following interesting 'times' for his ascent of MONT BLANC *via* the AIGUILLE BLANCHE DE PÉTÉRET as reported in 'A.J.' 39, 336-7. The party consisted of Herr von Kehl with Fritz Amatter, Fritz Suter and Lucien Proment, 'the latter of whom accompanied the Gugliermi party on their well-known ascent of Mont Blanc from the E.'

August 3, 1927	Courmayeur	dep. 15.00
	Gamba Hut	{ arr. 08.30
August 4	. . . . .	{ dep. 03.30
	Fresnay Glacier	arr. 04.30
	Brèche des Dames Anglaises	{ arr. 08.20
		{ dep. 09.20
	Aiguille Blanche de Pétérét	{ arr. 15.25
August 5	Col de Pétérét	{ dep. 16.00
		{ arr. 18.15
		{ dep. 04.10
	Foot of 'Grand Gen-	
	darme'	arr. 06.10
	The <i>Eckpfeiler</i>	arr. 07.20
	Mont Blanc de Courmayeur	arr. 11.45
	Mont Blanc	arr. 12.20
	Cabane Vallot	{ arr. 12.45
		{ dep. 13.40
	Courmayeur (<i>via</i> Dôme	
	Glacier)	arr. 21.30

¹ This gap, never traversed *en col*, was attained from the Brenva side, August 12, 1899, by Signori A. Hess and O. Leitz with Laurent Croux and Alexis Brocherel (*R.M.* 1899, 477-86; Kurz, 1927, p. 354).

The party 'ascended from the Col de Pétéret in a direct line *via* the watershed to the great red gendarme on the upper part of the Pétéret arête. The route hitherto usually followed lies a good deal more to the right, E. In very good snow conditions my route is preferable.'

It is reported that LE PÈRE ÉTERNEL,¹ the extraordinary pinnacle at the extremity of the N.W. arête of the Aiguille de la Brenva (see 'A.J.' 25, 503, 741-2, and especially the fine illustration facing 503), has been climbed by 'two young fellows of Courmayeur.' They are stated to have worked for days with chisels, iron spikes and fixed ropes. This sort of exploit is quite beyond the pale and is a degradation of mountaineering. Any steeple-jack could have done the work better and in a tenth of the time.

The A.C. narrowly avoids ROYAL CENSURE. We are permitted by Sir John Murray to publish the following extracts from 'The Letters of Queen Victoria,' Second Series, vol. 3, 1879-85. Edited by George Earle Buckle. Published by John Murray, London, 1928:—

'Sir Henry Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone.

'24th August, 1882.

'DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,—The Queen commands me to ask you if you think she can say anything to mark her disapproval of the dangerous Alpine excursions which this year have occasioned so much loss of life.—HENRY F. PONSONBY.

'*Editor's Note.*—Professor Frank Balfour and guide were killed 19th July; Mr. Penhall and guide on 3rd August; and Mr. Gabbett and two guides on 12th August.

'Mr. Gladstone to Sir Henry Ponsonby.

'IWERNE MINSTER HOUSE,

'25th August, 1882.

'MY DEAR SIR H. PONSONBY,—I do not wonder that the Queen's sympathetic feelings have again been excited by the accidents, so grave in character, and so accumulated during recent weeks, on the Alps. But I doubt the possibility of any interference, even by Her Majesty, with a prospect of advantage. It may be questionable whether, upon the whole, mountain-climbing (and be it remembered that Snowdon has its victims as well as the Matterhorn) is more destructive than various other pursuits in the way of recreation which perhaps have no justification to plead so respectable as that which may be alleged on behalf of mountain expeditions. The question, however, is not one of wisdom or unwisdom; but viewing it, as you put it, upon its very definite and simple grounds, I see no room for action.

¹ *Kurz*, 1927, p. 222, under name of 'Capucin de la Brenva.'

'My attempt at yachting came to grief, and the chance of renewing it is small.

'Yours sincerely,

'W. E. GLADSTONE.

'*Editor's Note.*—Mr. Dismore was killed on Snowdon on 20th August.'

Professor F. M. Balfour and his guide, Johann Petrus, of Stalden, were killed whilst making the ascent of the Aiguille Blanche de Pétéret, on July 19, 1882, 'A.J.' 11, 90-3.

Mr. William Penhall and his guide, Andreas Maurer, were overwhelmed by an avalanche on August 3, 1882, whilst ascending the Wetterhorn, 'A.J.' 11, 93-7.

Mr. W. E. Gabbett, a lecturer in the University of Durham, with his guides Joseph M. Lochmatter and the latter's eldest son, were all killed whilst making the ascent of the Dent Blanche on August 12, 1882, 'A.J.' 11, 97-9.

According to 'Die Alpen,' the ALTELS Glacier, which caused the disaster of 1895 in the neighbourhood of the Gemmi path, is again giving cause for uneasiness. Several large clefts are opening out and the snout is giving signs of being but loosely attached to the smooth rocks. A proposal to blast part of the lower portions away has been unfavourably reported on, but the glacier will be carefully watched throughout the summer of 1928.

A German expedition is reported as about to visit the BOLIVIAN CORDILLERAS. Illampu (6600 m.) is the principal objective. Herr Hans Pfann is to be the leader. Another German expedition is to leave for the ALTAI mountains (Turkestan). Herr E. Allwein will be leader of the mountaineering section of the party.

Count Aldo Bonacossa had a narrow escape on the N. buttress of PIZ BADILE on July 24. 'The leader took a terrible fall and in holding him I cut my left hand severely and dislocated my thumb. Fortunately, I had an English rope, which held. I was laid up for 2 months and am not quite fit yet, but my companion, who smashed his foot, is quite all right again.' [I cannot help drawing my friend's attention to 'A.J.' 37, 144, para. 2 and 153, last para. ! —E. L. S.]

When the ITALIAN HIMALAYAN EXPEDITION materializes, H.R.H. the Duke of Spoleto, brother of the Duke of Apuglia, will be leader.

One of the pleasantest features of the last seasons in the Alps has been the large increase of BELGIAN mountaineers. Many of these parties are as remarkable for their skill as all are conspicuous for their modesty.

DR. VON KEHL has very kindly presented a series of stereoscopic views of the Aiguille Blanche de Pétérét—Mont Blanc ridge. These views, which are of great interest, can be seen at the Alpine Club.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE F. MILNE, G.C.B., etc., Chief of the Imperial General Staff, has been created Field Marshal of the British Army. The new Field Marshal, affectionately known to many thousands of British soldiers as 'Uncle George,' will long be honoured by our French Allies as the foremost British exponent of European 'mountain' warfare. To the Royal Serbian Army and the (Hellenic) Cretan Division—fiercest of mountain fighters—the appointment will equally appeal. Those members of the Alpine Club who have served in the Balkans will appreciate the honour as much as its self-less Recipient.

The GROSS GLOCKNER has been ascended by what is claimed to have been the first complete traverse of the famous *Pallavicinirinne*. The party consisted of Herren W. Welzenbach and K. Wien—July 16, 1927. The Obere Glocknerscharte was attained in 4½ hrs. from the bergschrund, step-cutting in hard ice for some 350 m., *Jahresbericht des A.A.V., München, 1926-7, p. 42.*

The same annual reports the discovery of new routes up the GSCHNITZER (2957 m.) and PFLERSCHER TRIBULAUN (3102 m.). The ascent of the latter, a fine dolomitic peak, used to count as one of the hardest in the Eastern Alps, but has now become an everyday occurrence.

The same annual reports a total of no less than 2794 EXPEDITIONS, of which 316 were in the Western Alps, for the season of 1927, accomplished by the members of the A.A.V., München.

The disastrous floods in the Grisons at the end of last September have played havoc with the beautiful VAL BREGAGLIA. The chief village, Vicosoprano, had to be evacuated, and much damage was caused at Casaccia, Stampa, Borgonovo and Castasegna. At Promontogno, the picturesque old bridge connecting Bondo with the Maloja road was swept away by the Mera; the same fate happened to the Stampa bridge. The strong construction of the houses was responsible for the avoidance of loss of life, but the total damage is estimated at more than 20,000,000 francs. One of the most unfortunate results has been the renewal of the demand for barraging the LAKE OF SILS (draining in the opposite direction!) as well as the 'harnessing' of the Ordlegna and Albigna torrents, together with sluices for the Mera. The local gossip in Val Bregaglia is to the effect that the Upper Engadine having been ruined aesthetically by the construction of the Grand Hotel, St. Moritz and the Maloja Kursaal—the worst eye-sore in the Alps—Val Bregaglia has a perfect right to desecrate its own unique scenery!

HIGH LEVEL PATH IN THE MASINO DISTRICT.—A new path, similar to those in the central massif of the Brenta, is to be constructed to connect the Gianetti-(Badile-)Allievi-Cecilia Club huts. The path will be at an average height of 7000–8000 ft., and the gradient will be as level as possible. The distance between the Gianetti and Cecilia (Disgrazia) huts is nearly 11 miles. A new hut, to be an inn in summer, is to be constructed close to the old Cecilia hut. The path will traverse some of the wildest scenery in the Alps and should be a boon to old and young mountaineers alike. It is hardly possible to speak too highly of the scheme, since the one drawback to the Baths of Masino has been, hitherto, its lack of walks during doubtful weather. The Gianetti and Allievi huts are Inns in summer and a new Club hut—equally served by the path—is constructed near the head of Val Torrone at a height of 2600 m. and will be opened in May 1928. It will be known as *Capanna Paolo Ferrario* (from the C.A.I., *Sezione di Milano*, monthly, January 1928, with a panoramic sketch of the path and terrain).

A new S.T.D. Club hut—**REFUGE ADÈLE PLANCHARD**—was opened last August. It is situated at about 3200 m. on a spur descending to the S. of the Jumeaux de Roche Méane. It will be useful for the ascent of the Grande Ruine group. About 4½ hrs. distant from the Refuge de l'Alpe du Villar d'Arène; accommodation for 12 persons. From *La Montagne*.

A bibulous burglar. The guardian of the New Chalet Hôtel on the COL D'ISÉRAN, on returning to the Inn at the end of last autumn, perceived through an opened window a gentleman in course of disturbing the furniture. The guardian surrounded the inn with armed friends and sent—to Bourg St. Maurice—for gendarmes. In the fulness of time these latter arrived and 'rushed' the intruder, while feeding and drinking at the Inn's expense. He stated that he had arrived that morning, cold and hungry, over the Col de la Galise. His subsequent fate is not recorded, but he had consumed over 200 francs' worth of champagne alone. From *La Montagne*.

The projected road over the Col d'Iséran—one of the main thoroughfares of the ROUTE DES ALPES—which appears as duly constructed on several maps has not yet (January 1928) even been commenced. The Chalet Hôtel mentioned above is well constructed but badly placed. It must be in one of the most windy spots in the Alps.

A 'mountaineering' film called *The Wrath of the Gods* is being shown all over Great Britain. In view of the introductory title which states that the film is 'an enterprise by the Alpine Club and its members,' it may be well to state that the Alpine Club has not, nor ever has had, any connexion with this or any other film. We may add that some of the photography of the above film is excellent, the story absurd, and the acting grotesque. The scene always purporting to be in the

same spot, is laid, alternately summer or winter—according to the whims of the photographer—at Zermatt, Engelberg, St. Ulrich, Sils-Maria, Silvaplana and several other places, including the seaside. Among the mountains concerned are the inevitable Matterhorn, the Langkofel Group, the Torrone peaks and Ago di Cleopatra. For the scene of the final and ridiculous tragedy, no better setting, however, could be found than the frozen water conduit leading to the Silvaplana electric-light turbine! Any mountaineer visiting this film will acquit the Club of any participation in such an atrocity.

AN EVEREST *potin*. The American press is stating that a well-known traveller and photographer with several famous athletes are 'in training' for a further attempt on the mountain. It may be added that the Mount Everest Committee and H.M.'s India Office are in complete ignorance of the project and that no further developments with the Tibetan Government have occurred. It will be recollected that a party of 36 Swiss guides were stated, in 1924, to be busy injecting oxygen, 'subcutaneously,' into themselves previous to their departure for India, and also, that a recent 'authority' has recommended that Olympic teams *vice* mountaineers be employed 'not to assault but to *walk up* the mountain'!

WINTER ASCENTS. First winter traverse of LES ÉCRINS, January 15, 1928; the guides Casimir Rodier and Pierre and Henri Turc. The party left the new Vallon hut at 04.30, the Col des Avalanches at 08.00, where an icy wind was encountered, and attained the summit at 11.15. The weather was superb with a warm sun. Leaving the summit at 11.45 they reached the Col des Écrins at 13.05. The bergschrund being entirely closed, a very rapid descent brought them to La Bérarde at 16.00, 2½ hrs. from the Col. (From *La Montagne*, 1928, pp. 62–3.) It will be recollected that on February 21, 1926, Monsieur P. Armand-Delille accomplished the first winter ascent ('A.J.' 38, 125–6).

First winter ascent and traverse of the AIGUILLES DES DRUS. February 25, 1928; the guides Armand Charlet and Camille Dévouas-soud. ' . . . We have just accomplished this formidable expedition in the direction Petit-Grand Dru. Weather magnificent. Expedition from and to the Charpoua hut took exactly 10 hrs. With M. Blanchet on September 7, 1926 [? September 9], we took 8½ hrs., the quickest traverse known to me. This winter, the easiest part of the entire climb proved to be the ascent of the "Z." The descent of the Grand Dru to the bergschrund was one of the most awkward that I have ever accomplished—19 *rappels* instead of the normal 7. It took 3 hrs. and we were able to reach Argentière the same night' (Letter from Armand Charlet to M. Blanchet). The expedition must rank as one of the most extraordinary ever accomplished in the Alps. This and the traverse of Les Écrins show what professionals are capable of *when on their own*.

The G.H.M. now possesses 301 members, an increase of 56 since 1927. The record of expeditions, even for the 'summer' of 1927, is a very fine one. The *Annuaire* publishes a very seasonable note of warning: 'Le Comité n'a pas manqué d'être impressionné par des imprudences qualifiées commises cet été . . . il faut se persuader qu'on ne passe pas impunément sans transition des courses de troisième ordre aux courses extraordinaires.' One cannot fail to be impressed, unfavourably, both in the *Annuaire* and in our own JOURNAL, by the number of expeditions, of a more or less high order, accomplished, or at any rate completed, in the most execrable weather.

The ARÊTES DE LA MEIJE were reached for the third time on August 14, 1927, by MM. E. Stofer and A. Arnaud, the watershed being attained between the second and third teeth. The 'times' were 10½ hrs. from the Promontoire to the ridge. 'Expedition the finest and most difficult of our experience.' [The first ascent of the Etançons face of La Meije was made, of course, by the Herren Mayer with Angelo Dibona and L. Rizzi, July 28, 1912, 'A.J.' 26, 462. On this occasion the watershed was attained between the *first* and *second* teeth.] The 1927 party discovered in a sheltered spot some 120 ft. above the triangular névé patch, some articles of equipment probably belonging to M. de Rüz de Lavison who perished on this face in 1911, 'A.J.' 26, 77. From G.H.M. *Annuaire*, 1928, pp. 16-19.

Other interesting DAUPHINÉ expeditions, reported in the *Annuaire*, took place on Pic Gaspard, Roche Méane, Pic Bourcet and on Col Maudit, Col de Blaitière, Aiguille Verte, by the Charpoua face (twice), Les Droites, etc., in the MONT BLANC Group.

Alpinisme, the excellent Journal of the Club Alpin Français Académique, is now run as an independent publication. M. Henri de Ségogne, the well-known mountaineer, is the Editor. No. 8 contains an interesting account of the conquest of the N.W. slope of the COL MAUDIT. The expedition was a *very* dangerous one.

M. JACQUES DE LÉPINEY, now resident in Morocco, will be in the Alps again this summer.

S.A.C. HUTS.—*Die Alpen* gives the number of visitors as 51,815 in 1927 as against 46,076 in 1926. In the 102 Club Huts, the percentage of S.A.C. members to others works out as 33. The Boval Hut with 2814 visitors again heads the poll, while the Balmhorn with 46 and the Sciora with 50 are among the 'also ran.'

JUNGFRAUJOCH.—Dr. Claude Wilson writes: 'Mr. Oliver's paper ('A.J.' 39, 49-51) and Mr. Macdonald's comment (*Ib.* 340) would seem to indicate that this expedition is made much less frequently than one had supposed. I should have thought it was made three or four times every year; and, in any case, I feel sure that this

pass is crossed far more frequently than any other breach in the great wall—between the Scheidegg and the Wetterlücke. The late Frederick Gardiner crossed it on August 1, 1889 (with two Almers), and we (Wicks, Kesteven, and myself) followed in their steps next day. May not these be examples of what is not really uncommon? Hotel telescopes are not very busy between 5 and 7 in the morning.

‘But if individual records are desired, I would add that the expedition is more comfortably undertaken without sleeping in a hut. On the only occasion on which we slept at the Guggi (for the N. route up the Mönch) a storm burst upon us in the night and we returned empty-handed through four or five inches of fresh snow. On the other hand, we dined in comfort with our friends on two consecutive evenings, having crossed the Jungfrauoch and Mönchjoch in the interval. Starting much earlier than was needful as we meant to climb the Jungfrau, we never lit a lantern, reaching the upper Guggi plateau by moonlight, which made for slow progress among the crevasses and séracs. Though the night was fine it was hot, and the snow on the plateau was soft at daybreak. This was disconcerting so far as the Jungfrau was concerned, but we noticed a track of recently cut steps up the great ice-wall of the Jungfrauoch. Naturally, our plans underwent a change, for the steps, though rounded and shallowed by the hot sun of the previous day, only needed clearing and trimming. The traverse to the left at the top of the steep slope is, as Mr. Oliver remarks, “quite sensational.”

‘If a record of our “times” is of interest—it is thus:—

Wengern Alp, August 1	22.00
Old Guggi hut, August 1	23.50
August 2	00.45
Below Bergschrund	05.10–05.35
Top of ice-slope	07.00
Jungfrauoch	07.30–08.20
Ober Mönchjoch	09.20
Bergli hut	10.10–11.00
Bäregg	13.45–14.15
Grindelwald	15.00

‘Thence by train back to Scheidegg, and walked on to Wengern Alp.’

THE SKI-ING ACCIDENTS, 1927–28.—The English papers alone report to date over 70 fatal accidents. In *The Times* of January 9, seven such accidents were noted, but this has now been exceeded by an accident on the SONNBLICK (3103 m.) in the RAURIS, when thirteen ‘practised’ young men, out of seventeen, perished. They appear to have been sheltering, standing actually on a so-called *Schneebrett* or thick layer of newer snow adhering insufficiently to the older snow, so that the upper layer broke away carrying them down and burying them.

The snowcraft, even of ski-ers, would still seem to be ‘a rudimentary science.’ We were assured in the last JOURNAL that the

ski-er's 'constant preoccupation' . . . 'is responsible for the comparatively small number of accidents.' Such an assurance must count for little in view of the appalling sacrifice of this winter.

We cannot do better than repeat the remark made in vol. 29 of this JOURNAL :

'Mountaineering on Ski has come to stay, and within limits they are certainly admirable adjuncts to the tour, but it is idle to deny that they do induce and enable men to venture into places requiring great care, even in summer conditions, and doubly dangerous when masked by winter snow. The loss of many good men bears all too eloquent testimony to the truth of this assertion.'

PROPOSED INCREASED FACILITIES IN THE MT. AUX SOURCES REGION (Drakensberg).—Mr. H. G. Botha Reid, son-in-law of the late General Louis Botha, writes to Mr. Amery . . . 'You may be interested to hear that the Natal Mountain Club proposes erecting a three-compartmented hut on the Mt. aux Sources plateau near where the baby Tugela plunges over the edge into Natal. It will be constructed of local stone with a thatched-tripped roof and will not offend the susceptibilities of the aesthetic-minded. The key will be kept by Zancel at Gudu Hostel, and all visitors who love the mountains will be welcome to make use of the hut. The need for another hostel at Gudu, on a more pretentious scale, has been impressed upon the National Park Advisory Committee to such an extent that representations were recently made . . . The new place will be located at the base of Broom Hill ridge commanding an unrivalled view of Mt. aux Sources and the whole range as far as Cathkin Peak. There will be accommodation for 200 guests on a scale impossible of achievement at the existing hostel . . . an 18-hole golf course, tennis courts, swimming pool fed by Berg streams . . . will be constructed. . . . Bound up with the development is the building of a motor-road along the lower slopes of the Berg from Mt. aux Sources to Garden Castle in the Underberg District, a distance of approximately 150 miles. . . . The Minister of Finance, recently, for the first time paid a short visit to Mt. aux Sources, and it is understood that he is not unsympathetic. . . . Given a modern hostel at Gudu . . . and the Berg motor highway, this little portion of the Commonwealth should be able to attract many visitors. We also possess the unique advantage of an all-the-year-round season . . .'

THE following extract from *Nature* of March 3, 1928, p. 315, gives an indication of the greatest possible SPEED attainable by human beings for comparatively short ascents. It appears in a review of Prof. A. V. Hill's 'Muscular Movement in Man: the Factors governing Speed and Recovery from Fatigue' :—

'The greatest speed which can be maintained during exercise is therefore determined by considerations of the energy expenditure.

An example is given on p. 23, where the author estimates that a fit man might climb the Woolworth Building (792 ft.) in New York in eight minutes, finishing with an oxygen debt of 15 litres, which is about all a man can tolerate. A footnote adds that the newspapers reported that the feat had actually been accomplished in nine minutes.

We understand that Messrs. Farrar, Unna and Smythe are thinking of proceeding to New York to compete for the speed record; Mr. Smythe would act as time-keeper.

MR. J. A. B. BRUCE has been elected an Honorary Member of the Geneva Section of the S.A.C.

THE HELLENIC ALPINE CLUB was founded on the highest summit of Mount Olympus, September 12, 1928. We wish it every success and prosperity.

M. le BARON GABET has been promoted Officier de la Légion d'Honneur.

MONSIEUR le DOCTEUR HENRI FAES, President S.A.C., was a guest of the A.C. at the annual dinner of December 13. In honour of the great services rendered by him to mountaineering and as a mark of esteem for the S.A.C.—the eldest of our children—Dr. Faes was elected an Honorary Member of the Alpine Club before the General Meeting held on December 12, 1927.

MONSIEUR le LIEUTENANT-COLONEL REGAUD, Président du C.A.F., Honorary Member A.C., was also with us at the dinner of December 13. His genial presence and eloquence gave great pleasure to all, especially, if we are to credit current gossip, to a senior and very distinguished member. It is credibly reported that Colonel Regaud's presence alone deterred the said member from doing himself a serious, perhaps fatal, injury!

After an unseemly dispute between the numerous competitors, the Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Curator of Slides and Exhibition Selection Committee, has succeeded in—clandestinely—electing himself to the further post of HONORARY LIBRARIAN to the Alpine Club. All this despite the strenuous opposition of the Editor, 'A.J.,' naturally disgruntled at the (attempted) restriction on the number of his illustrations.

The title of the ALPINE JOURNAL has remained unchanged since its first appearance in 1863. Nevertheless, we notice with surprise that several British periodicals not unconnected with mountaineering, as well as individual writers, persist in referring to it as the ALPINE Club JOURNAL! Corresponding continental publications have never, to the best of our knowledge, fallen into this error, a quite inexcusable one in British reviewers.

CORRIGENDA.

MONT BLANC FROM THE BRENVIA GLACIER.—The *French* party of July 26, 1927, was composed of MM. Sauvage, R. Tézenas du Montcel and d'Aubigné, 'A.J.' 39, 335-6; while the British party of August 1 (*not* July 27) included Mr. G. S. Bower and *not* Mr. Brown. *Ibid.*, 336.

E. L. S.

SCHRECKHORN BY THE S.W. ARÊTE.—With reference to Mr. Slater's ascent ('A.J.' 38, 332), my friend, M. Jacques Lagarde, reminds me of the late Dr. Thomas Thomas's ascent ('A.J.' 25, 183), made in 1909 with the late Auguste Blanc, unfortunately killed on Mont Dolent in 1911. I much regret the oversight.

J. P. F.

HIMALAYAN NOTES.

THE HIMALAYAN CLUB.

WE have much pleasure in publishing *verbatim* a copy of a letter that we have received on the formation of the above-mentioned Club.

NEW DELHI,
December 20, 1927.

We are writing to you on a matter which has long been in our minds, and possibly also in yours. It is believed that there are now many in India who are interested in the Himalaya. Some of us have travelled in the Himalaya for one purpose or another. There are probably many more who are only deterred by ignorance of local conditions. The information now available is difficult to obtain, and even those who are familiar with one locality know little or nothing of conditions elsewhere.

We live within reach of the greatest mountain range in the world which, geographically and scientifically, is of extraordinary interest, and offers unique opportunities for mountain travel, exploration, and mountaineering. It has been suggested that a Himalayan Club should be formed with the object of assisting Himalayan travel and increasing our knowledge of the Himalaya in all its aspects. We are now writing to you to ask your views on this proposal.

The objects of the Alpine Club include the promotion of mountain climbing and mountain exploration, and of better knowledge of the mountains through literature, science, and art. We think that the scope of a Himalayan Club should be not less wide. We would suggest, therefore, that the objects of the Club should be a better knowledge of the Himalaya and of Himalayan geography, to encourage Himalayan science, literature, and art, and to assist

Himalayan travel, exploration, and mountaineering. In particular, and in pursuance of these objects, the Club should undertake :

- (1) To collect, classify, and publish first-hand descriptions of Himalayan routes, and information about peaks and passés ;
- (2) To give information, advice, and assistance to members ; and
- (3) To obtain the assistance of local officials for members travelling in the Himalaya.

Apart from the assistance that such a Club would give to its own members, we believe that it might be of great value to the Survey of India, to the Geological Survey and other scientific departments, and also from the point of view of military intelligence and training in mountain warfare. We do not suggest that the Club should be an official or semi-official organization. But we have been informally assured of the interest of the Departments of Government principally concerned.

The headquarters of the Club would naturally be at Simla, the Himalayan capital of India, where personal contact could be maintained with the Departments of Government interested. But in a country of such vast distances as India, it might also be desirable to have local or sectional headquarters ; and the Surveyor-General has suggested that some of the circle headquarters of the Survey of India might be utilized. But these and other details of organization would more appropriately be considered when a Club is definitely formed.

For this purpose it is suggested that it would be desirable to get together as many as possible of those who are willing to become founder members, at some central place at a convenient time. Delhi, on some date in the middle of February during the Horse Show week, has been suggested. It is recognized that the number who could be present would in any case be comparatively small, but it is hoped that others who were willing to support the proposal would send their views in writing. Arrangements would as far as possible be made to put up anyone coming to Delhi who wanted accommodation.

We are writing in the first instance only to those whom we know to have a definite interest in the Himalaya and in the objects of the proposed Club. It would naturally be considered at the first meeting what qualification for membership should be required, and it seems important, therefore, that only those whose interest is assured should be invited to become founder members. The names of those to whom this letter has been sent are appended. It will be seen that the list includes those who are known to have travelled in the Himalaya or to have contributed something towards Himalayan geography, science, literature or art, military and political officers whose work is on the frontier, members of the Survey of India, the Indian Forest Service, the Geological Survey and other scientific departments, and members of the Alpine Club now in India. We

have also sent copies to distinguished mountaineers and others who have travelled extensively in the Himalaya, but are not now in India.

To sum up, we now ask you—

- (1) To give your views and criticisms of the proposed Club and its objects, and your suggestions for its organization qualification for membership, and so on ;
- (2) To say whether you are willing to become a founder member and, if so, whether you could attend an inaugural meeting at Delhi during the next Horse Show week, say on Saturday the 18th February.

There is one other matter to which we have to refer. These proposals had already taken shape when we heard that 'The Mountain Club of India' had been formed with similar objects at Calcutta. We have discussed with the Honorary Secretary of the Club the possibility of amalgamation. While we appreciate that mountaineers in Calcutta may be unwilling to be dependent on an organization with its headquarters at Simla, it would hardly be possible, for similar reasons, for a Calcutta Club to meet the requirements of Northern India. We understand, however, that the headquarters of the Mountain Club need not be regarded as permanently located at Calcutta, and fusion might perhaps be considered later. But in a country so large as India, the geographical and administrative difficulties of a single all-India Club will always be very great. If a Himalayan Club is formed with the objects that we have suggested, we feel sure that the two Clubs will cordially co-operate by mutual exchange of information and assistance to members ; and we hope that those whose interests are not local will be able to be members of both.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) G. L. CORBETT.

KENNETH MASON.

The HIMALAYAN CLUB was founded at New Delhi on February 17, 1928.

There are about 100 Founder Members. The Officers of the Club are as follows :

President	, Field-Marshal Sir William Birdwood, C.-in-C. in India.
Vice-Presidents	{ Major-General K. Wigram, G.O.C. Waziristan. Colonel Commandant E. A. Tandy, Surveyor-General.
Secretary	. The Hon. Sir Geoffrey L. Corbett (A.C.)
Editor.	. Major Kenneth Mason (A.C.).
Treasurer	. J. W. Young, Esq.

NEW ZEALAND NOTES.

THE bodies of Mr. Sydney King and the guide Darby Thomson, who perished on the Linda Glacier, February 22, 1914, during the descent of Mt. Cook, have been discovered by two visitors from Christchurch. They have been buried at the foot of the monument, erected to their memory, at the entrance to the Hooker Valley, on February 20 last.

Two days later, on the fourteenth anniversary of the accident, a memorial service was held at the monument, at which the Rev. Adam Begg of Imaru officiated. Mrs. Clark of the Hermitage laid a wreath on the grave, while the service was attended by visitors at the Hermitage.

It will be recollected that the accident was caused by a gigantic ice avalanche falling from a peak N. of Dampier and overwhelming the entire party. The body of the second guide, Jock Richmond, was found by Captain Dennistoun's search party a day or two later ('A.J.' 23, 222-30).

It is stated that Mr. King's watch and camera were intact (letter to Mr. R. Corry).

CANADIAN AND AMERICAN NOTES.

A.A.C. CAMP.—The Annual Camp will be held near the Lake of the Hanging Glacier in the Southern Selkirks above the Columbia Valley. Camp will probably commence on July 17, 1928, and continue for two weeks.

MOUNT LOGAN EXPEDITION.

Receipts.

Subscriptions acknowledged in detail in Gazette . . . \$12,793.48

Expenditures.

Organization: Meetings, Press, Telegrams, Stationery, Printing, Office Expenses, Sundries	\$998.86
Travelling expenses to and in Alaska and freight charges	1,105.04
Preliminary equipment	2,521.92
Food, wages, supplementary equipment en route	7,496.27
Refund to A. H. MacCarthy towards reconnaissance expenses	671.39
	<hr/> \$12,793.48 <hr/>

TONQUIN VALLEY CAMP, 1926.—The twenty-first Annual Camp of the Alpine Club of Canada was held from July 26 to August 7, 1926, in Tonquin Pass, near Moat Lake, in Jasper Park. The Provincial boundary line passed through the camp, so that a small portion of it was in Mt. Robson Park.

MT. GEIKIE naturally attracted first attention from the climbers. Messrs. Drinnan and Grassi worked out a new route which was used in the subsequent ascents. MT. REDOUBT was attempted unsuccessfully, but another opportunity was not afforded. The first ascent of MT. TURRET was made; it is a mountain to be treated with respect, as there is much rotten rock upon it.

PRINCIPAL EXPEDITIONS IN 1926 (some of which are described in 'A.J.' 38, 249-52).—Mr. Howard Palmer and Dr. Hickson started from Jasper on July 4, 1926, with the Swiss guide, Hans Fuhrer. Their main objective was MT. FRYATT (11,026 ft.), some 23 miles in a direct line to the S., visible from Jasper, and the highest unclimbed peak in the National Park. One of the chief difficulties of the trip was the crossing of the Whirlpool and reaching a camping-ground near the higher of two lakes (approx. 6600 ft.), from which Divergence Creek flows. A trail had to be cut most of the way from the Whirlpool, and much arduous and skilful work was required in order to get the horses around the lower of the two lakes.

MT. FRYATT was climbed on July 10 by the S. and S.W. ridges, the ascent proving so long that, although a start was made at 3.45 A.M., the party did not reach camp again until the following morning. An unpleasant experience was an electric storm which developed while the climbers were on the summit. Three days later, the camp having been moved to a neighbouring meadow to the S.W. (approx. 7000 ft.), a pinnaced rock peak, LAPENSÉE (10,190 ft.), was ascended; and a few days after this another virgin and an unnamed peak, situated S.E. from the camp, was crowned with a cairn. From Mt. Fryatt at least half a dozen lakes were seen which are not on any map.

The party got back to Jasper on July 22. On the 25th Mr. Palmer and Dr. Hickson set out with Jean Weber and travelled up the Astoria on their way to the A.C.C. Camp in Tonquin Valley. On the 26th they made the first ascent of THRONE MT. (10,144 ft.), W. of Mt. Edith Cavell, and, the tour being a long one, the climbers had another experience of a night in the open.

In the latter part of August Dr. Hickson, with Edward Feuz, Jun., made the ascent of the E. face of the S.E. tower of CASTLE MT. (circa 9850 ft.), situated about half way between Lake Louise and Banff, and reports it to have been the most difficult crag work he accomplished last season or for many seasons in the Rockies. Rope shoes were used on the final 800-900 ft. *Rappels* had to be employed in the descent.

The first ascent of MT. KERKESLIN was accomplished on August 12, 1926, by Mr. F. H. Slark, with J. Weber.

Other first ascents were those of BENNINGTON PEAK and MT. BLACKHORN.

Two expeditions in 1926 and 1927, led by Mr. W. A. Munday, were made to the 'MYSTERY' PEAK, at the head of Bute Inlet. The region had not been surveyed, but the height of the mountain has been roughly estimated at about 13,000 ft. Photographs show it to be a very fine mountain peak, with other fine ones around it. Its elevation and its nearness to the sea coast make it the centre of many storms, and the expedition is a strenuous one. A third attempt will be made in 1928, which it is hoped the results of previous experiences will render successful.

We are indebted to Major F. V. Longstaff, Convenor, Maritime Committee, British Columbia Historical Association, for the following notes :

MOUNT MYSTERY.

Historical Notes. ('History of B. C.,' by Howay and Scholefield, 2 vols.)

Vol. II, p. 178.

'Early in 1862 Mr. Alfred Waddington obtained a charter for the construction of the Bute Inlet Road, entitling his company to collect certain tolls for ten years on all merchandise carried over it. The surveying and preliminary work having been already finished, construction commenced immediately. By the end of April 1864, a road, or more properly a pack trail, had been completed for 40 or 50 miles up the valley of the Homathco. Sixteen white men in two parties of 12 and 4 respectively were at work four miles apart. Another man, Timothy Smith, was in charge of the ferry where the trail crossed the Homathco river. Some 16 Indians were also employed as packers to assist in the work. On April 29, 1864, three Indians came to the ferry, where a considerable quantity of provisions and supplies were stored in charge of the ferryman. It is said that they demanded food, which request being refused by Smith, they shot him. . . .'

The Indians shot and killed nearly all the white workers and thus began what was known as the Chilcotin War. This stopped all the road construction work of Waddington. On p. 188 we find :

'Mr. Waddington also came forward with a claim for compensation. He petitioned to be allowed to surrender his Charter on being reimbursed the moneys expended on the Bute Inlet scheme, amounting in all to some \$50,000.'

(Walbran, 'B. C. Coast Names,' p. 73.) Bute Inlet was proposed by Alfred Waddington in 1862, as a terminus of a railway and steamboat route between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. He

spent five years in procuring information respecting his proposed interoceanic route. See *Geographical Journal*, 1868, vol. xxxviii, pp. 118-128. Frederick O. Whympers, artist, in his work on Alaska, gives an interesting account of a visit he made to the head of Bute Inlet in 1864.

Waddington Mountain.

First. RECORDED by Alfred Waddington's party.

Second. SEEN by Captain R. P. Bishop, B.C.L.S., in summer of 1922, from a great distance, at a point above S. end of Talta Lake.

Third. SEEN by Dr. V. Dolmage, Ph.D., of Dominion Geological Survey, soon after Bishop.

Fourth. SEEN and approached by Don Munday, who discovered which of the three peaks it was.

It has been found that Mount Waddington and Mount Mystery are one and the same peak. It was surveyed in the summer of 1927 by Mr. J. T. Underhill, B.C.L.S., and found to be 13,260 ft. in height; this makes it the highest in B. C.

Lat. 51.20.32.

Long. 125.15.34.5.

The Wheeler Inter-Provincial Survey named a peak 'Waddington Mt.' in the Yellow Head Pass area.

There should be no hesitation of those representing geographical mapping at Ottawa, in placing a name for the highest mountain in B. C. I refer to that mountain a few years ago brought to general attention by Captain R. P. Bishop, F.R.G.S. From examination of his record it appeared that on the original map made of the lower portion of the Homathco River by Alfred Waddington, this exceptionally outstanding mountain mass had been viewed by Waddington or members of his party. The right of Waddington, more especially his place in the early history of B. C., is a very extensive undertaking; speaking generally to mention one outstanding feature is—that subsequent to his effort to build a road from the head of Bute Inlet to the Cariboo—whilst in London it would appear that he was the first on record as having voiced the proposal of a railroad from Eastern Canada to the Pacific.

FREDERICK V. LONGSTAFF.

Mr. A. J. Ostheimer III led an important expedition in the COLUMBIA ICEFIELD country, details of which have not yet been received.

Accounts of Dr. J. M. Thorington's ascents in the FORBES-LYELL Groups were given in 'A.J.' 39, 52-71.

FATAL ACCIDENTS.—Mr. M. D. Geddes was killed on the descent from MT. LEFROY in August 1927. His great love of the mountains

and his hard and enthusiastic work for all that the Club stands for made him admired and respected.

Mr. F. H. Slark accompanied by F. Routis, who will be remembered in the Tonquin Valley Camp, were lost in an attempt to scale MT. REDOUBT. No trace of them was found by the search party after their last bivouac below Drawbridge Pass.

The Alpine Club expresses its deep sympathy to the Alpine Club of Canada and to the relatives of the deceased.

It is hoped, through the generosity of Major and Mrs. Brewster, to construct a hut in the neighbourhood of Tonquin Valley, the same to be known as the WHEELER HUT.

The 1927 Annual Camp was held in the LITTLE YOHO Valley and was attended by 101 persons.

Professor CHARLES E. FAY, Hon. Member A.C., after sixty years on the Faculty at Tufts, has resigned. Professor Fay is, we are glad to say, still very active and was touring in Central Europe during the summer of 1927. Recent references to Professor Fay will be found in 'A.J.' 31, 2, and 33, 137.

The Department of the Interior has decided to give the name of MOUNT AMERY, in honour of the British Secretary for the Dominions, to a peak 10,900 ft. high, situated in the Province of Alberta in latitude 53.03, longitude 116.59, where the Alexander River joins the North Saskatchewan River (*The Times*, February 8).

ALPINE CLIMBING PARTY, DAUPHINÉ, FRANCE, AUGUST 8-22, 1928. —From the climbing centres at La Bérarde or La Grave the following peaks over 10,000 ft. in height can be reached: Meije, Râteau, Les Écrins, Les Bans, Grande Ruine, Pelvoux, and Ailefroide. A well-placed system of huts permits of long days in the highest altitudes. Two excellent Chamonix guides of the younger school, Marcel Bozon and André Cachat, have been engaged. On days unfavourable for climbing the higher peaks they will give instruction in the technique of rock climbing; also snow and ice work, such as step cutting.

The supplementary trip, under the leadership of Robert L. M. Underhill, to the Chamonix and Zermatt regions in Switzerland for guideless climbing has excited much interest. The members of this small group of men will be chosen from those who qualify during the Dauphiné trip. There will be opportunity to climb many of the well-known peaks, such as Mont Blanc, the Matterhorn, and the Grépon (from *Bulletin*, Appalachian Mountain Club, February, 1928).

REVIEWS.

H.-B. DE SAUSSURE.

Le Mont Blanc et le Col du Géant. Annoté par E. Gaillard et Henry-F. Montagnier. Lyon: Chez M. Audin et Compagnie. 1927.

Two years ago we had occasion to notice¹ the luxuriously printed and fully annotated edition of the previously unpublished MS. Journal kept by de Saussure during his stay at Chamonix in 1787, supplied us by Commandant Gaillard and Mr. Montagnier. It is now our pleasure to welcome a companion volume. The same editors furnish us with a reprint of the chapters in the famous 'Voyages' which describe, or bear upon, de Saussure's two great expeditions, the ascent of Mont Blanc and the passage of the Col du Géant. Previous handy volumes of picturesque extracts had made these accessible to the general public. But there must be many mountaineers who will be glad to possess them in the attractive form in which they are now offered—a limited edition of 450 copies, adorned with admirable reproductions of some of the drawings by Théodore de Saussure and Bourrit which illustrated the original work. Moreover, an historical value is added to the reprint by the twenty-nine pages of closely printed annotations with which it concludes.

The reader, instructed by the recent researches of Dr. Dübi and Mr. Montagnier,² will hardly look for fresh light on de Saussure's exploits and adventures, yet he will find among the Notes several documents hitherto unprinted, or only partially printed, fully set out. Perhaps the most interesting of these is a long letter written by Bourrit to a correspondent at Lausanne shortly after his abortive attempt on Mont Blanc with de Saussure in 1785 by the Aiguille du Goûter route. This is the letter he submitted to de Saussure as an apology for the more or less public aspersions on the latter as a rock-climber on which he had ventured. Here he goes to the opposite extreme, dwelling on the courage which enabled the man of science to continue his observations without regard to the perils of the climb. It is a very human and characteristic document. We recognize our old friend the Precentor, struggling between his invincible vanity and

¹ *Alpine Journal*, 38, 348.

² *Paccard wieder Balmat*. Berne, 1913. Freshfield's *Life of de Saussure*. London, 1920. See also *A.J.* 36, 158, where Mr. Montagnier supports me in considering L'Evêque's sketches to have been the source of all the de Saussure prints. He does not, however, discuss or explain the origin of the version of 'The Descent' reproduced by Whymper in his *Guide to Chamonix*, which shows the hut on the Col du Géant backed by Mont Blanc.

egotism and his reluctance to break off relations with a valuable patron.

Another of the more important discussions in the Editors' Notes concerns a problem that has exercised many of those interested in investigating the early annals of Mont Blanc: the authorship, and subject, and relations of the series of well-known and frequently reproduced coloured prints which represent the Genevese savant and his troop of attendants, guides and porters, engaged on a glacier expedition.

At first sight the evidence in the case appears singularly contradictory. Let us summon de Saussure to give his testimony. We quote the official advertisement of the second edition of his 'Relation abrégée d'un Voyage à la cime du Mont Blanc. En août 1787':

'Nouvelle édition faite pour accompagner deux Estampes enluminées qui représentent cette expédition publiées par Chrétien de Mechel. 12mo, pp. 39. Basle, 1790.'

This publication is duly noted in Mr. Montagnier's 'Bibliography of Mont Blanc from 1786 to 1853' (ALPINE JOURNAL, 25, 613), where Mr. Montagnier makes the following comment: 'A short notice of the two plates pp. 5-7 was added to this edition by de Saussure.' This notice has been reprinted for the first time in the work now under review. We reprint it in full here:

'Les deux planches que M. de Mechel vient de faire graver pour représenter mon voyage au Mont Blanc donnent très bien l'idée générale de cette expédition, de la vue de ces montagnes, de la marche et des attitudes des voyageurs.

'On voit dans la Planche I^{re}, qui est celle de la montée, la manière la plus commode et la plus sûre de se faire aider par les guides sans les fatiguer et sans embarrasser leur marche. Une perche de sapin légère quoique forte, dont deux guides tiennent chacun une extrémité, tandis que le voyageur la tient lui-même par le milieu, lui présentant un point d'appui assuré pour le retenir au bord d'un précipice si le pied lui glisse, ou que la neige lui manque sous ses pieds; et il peut lui-même sauver un de ses guides en cas qu'un pareil accident lui arrive.

'La II^e Planche, qui est celle de la descente, représente la manière de descendre sur la neige avec la plus grande rapidité, en se glissant debout sur les pieds parallèles et avec le corps appuyé en arrière sur un bâton. Les guides de Chamouni se glissent ainsi même sur la glace vive et rapidement inclinée avec une hardiesse et une adresse étonnantes: ils savent s'arrêter où ils veulent en rapprochant le bâton du corps et en enfonçant dans la glace la pointe ferrée de ce bâton. Mais cet exercice est dangereux, lorsque la pente aboutit à un précipice ou à une crevasse. Aussi voit-on un des guides retourné en arrière et prêt à retenir le voyageur au bord de la crevasse en cas qu'il ne puisse pas s'arrêter lui-même.

'Mais ce qu'il y avait de plus difficile à rendre et que M. de Mechel a exprimé aussi bien qu'on puisse le faire dans une estampe enluminée

c'est l'aspect de ces déserts hérissés de rochers sourcilleux couverts de neiges et de glaces et de ces gouffres ouverts au milieu de ces glaces éternelles. Ainsi par le moyen de cet ouvrage de M. de Mechel ceux qui ne peuvent pas aller sur les lieux admirer ces étonnants objets pourront sans fatigue et sans danger meubler leurs têtes de ces grandes images.'

Here we possess an emphatic assertion by de Saussure himself that the prints in question represent his adventures on Mont Blanc. This, it may seem, should settle this part of the question once for all.

But, if we look to the Catalogue of the Exhibition of Swiss Coloured Prints held by the Alpine Club in 1924, we find a duplicate of one of these views—inferior in execution and with certain variants, it is true, but obviously derived from the same source—described as follows :

'132. L'Evêque. Monsieur de Saussure, son fils et ses guides, arrivant au Glacier du Tacul au Grand Géant où ils ont habité 17 jours sous des tentes en juillet 1788.' The next entry runs :

'133. Monsieur de Saussure, son fils et ses guides, descendant le Glacier du Tacul.' Of this we shall have more to say hereafter.

Turning further over the pages of the same Catalogue we come, under the title 'Woche', to a description of two views which are obviously the same as those described in de Saussure's notice attached to the 1790 edition of his 'Relation abrégée.' The entry is as follows :

'208 and 209. Voyage de M. de Saussure à la cime du Mont Blanc au mois d'Août 1787. Publié par Chr. de Mechel en 1790. Grand in folio large, en couleurs, grandes marges, 1^{ère} et 11^{ème} planche.'

Mr. Lloyd, an assiduous student and collector of Alpine prints, in an introduction to the Catalogue comments on these prints as follows :

'Chr. de Mechel (1737-1817) is represented by the well-known prints of H. B. de Saussure's Ascent and Descent of Mont Blanc, and the Club is fortunate in being able to show a copy of the rare suppressed first plate showing de Saussure sitting on the steep snow preparing to slide over a crevasse. The story goes that when a few copies had been struck the family (or de Saussure himself) objected to what it considered the undignified attitude in which he was descending, so it was changed to the well-known print with de Saussure standing up.'

At this point we may do well to inquire—and we shall find our curiosity easily satisfied by a reference to the list of Alpine artists in Mr. Baillie Grohman's noble volume on 'Sport in Art'—what were the relative positions of the individuals named as connected with the production of the prints under review.

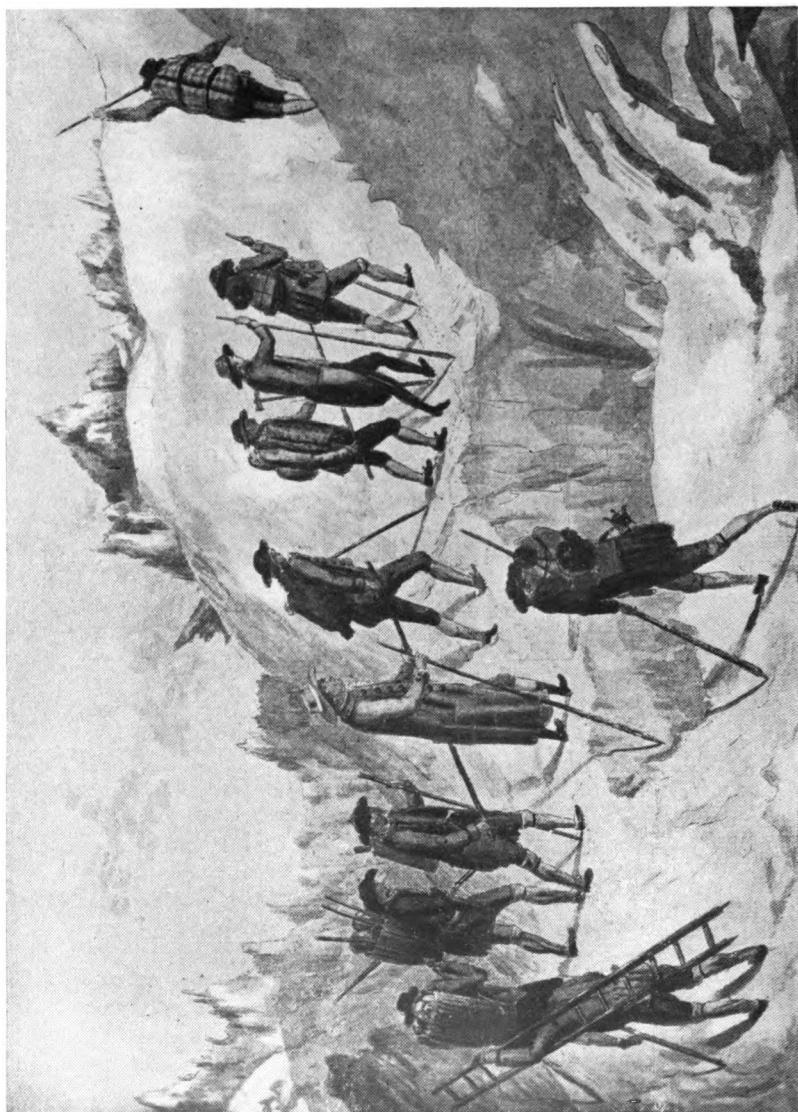
Henri l'Evêque was a young painter de Saussure took with him to Chamonix in 1788, the year of his passage of the Col du Géant.

Chrétien de Mechel was a publisher and art dealer of Basle who subsequently rose to considerable eminence in his trade.

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F. Thevoz et Cie, Genève.

ASCENSION d'HORACE-BÉNÉDICT de SAUSSURE ET DE SON FILS AU COL du GÉANT
EN JUILLET, 1788.

(From a print in the possession of Mr. D. W. Freshfield.)

Marquart Wocher is identified as an artist employed by Chrétien de Mechel in the preparation of his coloured prints. How his name came to be inserted on certain copies of them is uncertain. He may have been the artist employed by de Mechel to adapt l'Evêque's drawings for the 'Relation abrégée.'

Let us go on to examine more in detail the history of the de Saussure prints—that is, of the various reproductions of the l'Evêque sketches. Can we produce any facsimile of one of the original drawings? Here Whympers's 'Guide to Chamonix' comes to our help and points the way. A footnote on p. 39 runs as follows:—

'The original meteorological observations made by de Saussure on the Col du Géant were published *in extenso* for the first time by his grandson (Henri de Saussure) in the "Mémoires de la Société de Physique et d'Histoire Naturelle de Genève" in 1891. . . The Mémoires have as frontispiece a photographic reproduction of a drawing which is stated to be a "Dessin authentique retrouvé dans les papiers de H.-B. de Saussure relatifs à cette expédition." Turning to our book-case we find the *Observations* with their frontispiece. Here we undoubtedly have under our eyes a facsimile of one of l'Evêque's sketches certified by de Saussure as of the Col du Géant. It is the original of the well-known print catalogued under l'Evêque, No. 132, 'M. de Saussure arrivant au Glacier du Tacul' in the Alpine Club Exhibition. We note at once that it is more vigorous and lifelike than either of the prints produced from it; it may even lead us to suspect l'Evêque of having been a young man with a touch of humour; and help us to appreciate better de Saussure's motive for making modifications in several of the published prints! For in this drawing the savant appears as a somewhat patriarchal figure in a very long coat and a broad-brimmed straw hat, dangling helplessly a prodigious alpenstock over the edge of a crevasse, while his son is represented as a nimble youth, the guides and porters are characteristic figures, and the ice scenery is for the date free from gross exaggeration [*see illustration*]. The engraved print has other differences from the drawing in detail and in the order of the little procession, but their connexion is indisputable.

We come now to print No. 133, "M. de Saussure descendant le Glacier du Tacul." The plate is signed "H. l'Evêque delin. et sculpsit." Having regard to the use of Tacul in its title, it may be as well to remind readers of a sentence in one of de Saussure's letters to his wife from the Col du Géant [Freshfield's 'Vie de de Saussure,' French Edition, p. 229]: 'J'ai rebaptisé cette Montagne lui ôtant le nom du Tacul, qui est à sept lieues de là, tandis qu'il y a tout auprès la magnifique Aiguille du Géant, que l'on voit depuis Genéhod.'

Despite the failure to recognize the new nomenclature, the locality represented is not open to any doubt. In the foreground is a glacier pool from which a guide is drinking. The two de Saussures

are shown sauntering down a perilously steep snowslope, while some guides linger behind, where in the middle distance de Saussure's hut and tent are visible on the Col itself. A white dome in the background stands for Mont Blanc [compare Théodore de Saussure's view published in the 'Voyages']. Far below is seen a straight valley with a church on the left bank of the torrent. No valley is visible on the Savoy side from the Col du Géant; this, therefore, must be intended for the Val d'Aosta and Courmayeur.

The second print of 'The Descent,' that published by Chrétien de Mechel, represents a party descending a crevassed glacier. This is the print the two versions of which are described in Mr. Lloyd's Introductory Note to the Club Exhibition. The rare 'suppressed' print, a copy of which is possessed by Mr. Lloyd, shows de Saussure, flat on his back with snow-white hair and the tails of a scarlet coat flying out behind him, while he is being held by a guide from sliding into a crevasse. We do not wonder at the savant's insistence on its modification! Since de Saussure did not descend the Glacier du Tacul, but went down the rocks on the Italian side to Courmayeur, the print before us can have no connexion with the Col du Géant expedition. Its origin must have been independent. We venture to suggest the following explanation: About 1789 de Saussure was assured that there was a pressing demand for a second edition of his 'Relation abrégée,' and it occurred to him to render it more attractive by illustrations. He had at hand l'Evêque's drawings of the Col du Géant. They had been lithographed by Kellner and published at Geneva about 1789. 'The Ascent of the Tacul' could easily have its title converted: 'The Descent,' owing to its local detail, was unavailable. So a previously unused sketch by the artist was procured, named 'The Descent of Mont Blanc,' and made to serve as a companion to 'The Ascent.' De Saussure sent the drawings to a well-known publisher and art-dealer, Chrétien de Mechel at Basle, with whom he had previously had connexions. There they were engraved and improved under his own personal supervision. As to the change in title in the case of 'The Ascent,' de Saussure seems to have felt no scruples.

Such, I venture to suggest, was the origin of the 'Wocher' prints, Nos. 208, 209, of the Club Catalogue. They are far superior to those previously published at Geneva, and still more to the many copies—or travesties—of them issued subsequently by various publishers at Berne and elsewhere.

The apparent contradiction—or confusion—with regard to the drawings illustrating de Saussure's Alpine feats is now, I hope, resolved, and what happened made clear. The evidence that the artist responsible for the original sketches on which all the prints were based was H. l'Evêque is, I think, conclusive. Chrétien de Mechel was the publisher responsible for their reproduction; Wocher an artist employed in it.

D. W. F.

Sport and Travel in the Highlands of Tibet. By Sir Henry Hayden and César Cosson, with an Introduction by Sir Francis Younghusband. Richard Cobden-Sanderson, Thavies Inn. London, 1927.

SIR HENRY HAYDEN was a great traveller. His restless spirit and inquiring mind are stamped indelibly on Central Asia. This volume tells of one of his exploits, the latest and perhaps the most important. Both Hayden and his friend Cosson combine to tell their story of adventure. It is an eminently fitting combination. Together they journeyed through unknown regions; roped together they met their death; and now they lie side by side in the same mountain grave at Lauterbrunnen.

Their book opens with an Introduction by Sir Francis Younghusband. Introductions often seem out of place; but here we have one peculiarly suitable. Hayden had previously served with Sir Francis on the Mission to Lhasa in 1904. Both were kindred spirits with the same love of Nature and adventure. Both knew what it was to contend with obstacles and to penetrate into the unknown.

Then we pass to the journey itself. Hayden in a way was particularly fortunate compared with most Tibetan travellers. He had behind him the Tibetan Government. The Tibetans had suddenly got interested in minerals. Perhaps their country might have hidden resources. Hayden was invited to investigate the problem. Here, therefore, was a splendid opportunity. Hayden took it. It is easy to imagine what difficulties were solved. Hayden became an official envoy. Problems about transport, paucity of supplies, contentions with officials, suspicious interferences: all these and a host of other difficulties must have vanished before this envoy from Lhasa. The great difficulty of Tibet was overcome from the start. Hayden had the Government of Lhasa at his back.

He begins with the preliminary arrangements. This is often omitted in works of travel. Hayden, however, gives many details. He tells what he required in the way of servants, transport, clothing, provisions, sporting equipment, scientific materials. It is a collection of valuable information for anyone thinking of Himalayan travel.

Fully equipped, they started from Darjeeling, followed the well-known route to Lhasa, which they reached on April 26. Two weeks were spent at Lhasa. Officials had to be interviewed; final preparations had to be made. They saw all that was worth seeing at Lhasa, and give an interesting description of the city. We are told how the Central Administration works, what power is exercised by the Dalai Lama, the nature of his relations with the various Sha-Pés who correspond somewhat with our Secretaries of State. We learn about the institutions and activities of Lhasa, its incredible ignorance, its amazing filth, its hordes of beggars, its pandemonium of dogs.

Their explorations fell into two sections. The first was a journey to the North-West which led them on to the Great Central Plateau.

The second was a journey to the South-East into the valleys of the Tsangpo and its tributaries.

Take first the Great Plateau journey. It led them through a maze of Tibetan lakes for nearly two and a half months. The account of it is an interesting narrative of what is typical Tibetan travel. The altitude is over 16,000 feet; the country is treeless, brown and barren; the cold is severe; there are piercing winds with storms of dust; the empty plains stretch out before the eye with nothing on them but black nomad tents. Travel in such a country is always disagreeable. At times it reaches genuine hardship. Hayden's story is of the type made familiar to us by many explorers. We have the long marches, the difficult passes, the failures of transport, the absence of fuel, the wind-chapped faces, the scarcity of food. Hayden and his party had their full share of it. Their journey took them through the most inhospitable area and over much unexplored ground.

The second journey was to the South-East. It occupied them one month. They found themselves in a very different type of country from that which they explored on the first journey. They were now in far more attractive surroundings, in deep valleys with wooded slopes, amongst sheltered villages enclosed in vegetation, on ground covered with mountain flowers. Their route led them past the monastery of Samyé, which, with the exception of Lhasa and Shigatse, is the most awe-inspiring spot to the Tibetan.

Thus the book will give a very vivid idea of the great variation in Tibetan travel. But far from being a book of mere travel incident, it is full of valuable information on this strange country and still stranger people. Tibet has four characteristic features: monks, beggars, dogs, ruins; and the book has plenty to tell about all of them. It also has many tips about travel which would be of value to a budding explorer. Here and there we have items of interest on the fauna. A number of shooting incidents are recorded, including the killing of three gazelle with a single bullet by Cosson. There is just one thing we do regret, and that is the conspicuous absence of almost all reference to the scientific work. Hayden, no doubt, thought that his own speciality would lack interest to the public who will read his volume. Perhaps he was right, perhaps not. For ourselves, we would gladly have learnt something of how the Great Plateau was built from one who could speak as its greatest authority.

R. W. G. H.

A History of Ski-ing. By Arnold Lunn. Pp. 492, profusely illustrated. Oxford University Press. 1927. Price 16s.

THIS tremendous work, really a skier's 'Who's Who,' is a tribute to Mr. Lunn's industry if not always to his accuracy. It consists, very largely, of reprinted articles from this and former 'Ski Year Books.' Criticisms of such can be applied, consequently, to this book.

Winter 'Mountaineering on Foot and on Ski,' pp. 57-112, and Appendix X., 'First Winter and First Ski Ascents,' pp. 459-82, are what we are concerned with. Of the first we will content ourselves with stating that the author has shown great discrimination and care, and the chapter will form an interesting and valuable contribution to British Alpine literature. The illustrations are admirable—as indeed they are throughout the work—and among them is the best portrait of the late Mr. Coolidge that we have seen.

Of the appendix it is possible to make many and severe criticisms. The topographical order, E. to W., is in direct opposition to British Alpine practice. The sub-divisions of the Alps are often grotesque, while (p. 453) 'Bernina and Bregl' [= Bregaglia ? Bergell ?] and 'Cotian' (p. 479) are errors too serious to avoid notice; these are accentuated, moreover, by being printed in thick capitals. Mr. Lunn would have forfeited for ever his 'intermittent' friendship with Mr. Coolidge. We took the trouble to look up the quoted reference to the 'first' ski ascent of the Lyskamm (p. 472), our reason for such petty conduct being that parts of the Lyskamm are possible on ski for an expert in want of a new sensation. Alas, the periodical and page referred to contain no mention whatever of the mountain. We notice with some surprise that the *April* 5, 1925, ascent of the Dent du Requin was accomplished on ski! The student of this appendix can, if it so pleases him, find countless misprints and topographical errors.

The author has the courage of his convictions. The mountaineer-reader, perhaps a survivor of the Golden Age, is still informed that the 'skier has contributed far more than the root climber to the science of snow-craft.' The *naïveté* and true enthusiasm of Mr. Lunn disarm criticism; we wish him well.

The British Ski Year Book, 1927. Edited by Arnold Lunn. Keith & Hutchings. Price 10s.

If this Annual contains but too little, besides the illustrations, of interest to mountaineers, it yet admirably fulfils its purpose as regards ski-runners. The photographs are of quite exceptional merit and are beautifully reproduced.

There is a long report on the Valluga accident of January 1, 1927, near Züri (pp. 18-24). It tells us nothing fresh, since, following the precedent of most Commissions, Royal and otherwise, no conclusion, or rather so many, which amount to the same thing, is come to by the examiners. These latter, through adverse weather, failed to get any further than Züri. What relation the non-arrival of a weather report from Munich—in the plains and more than 100 miles distant—could have had with the accident passes our comprehension. Nevertheless there is evidence here and throughout the Annual that British ski authorities are now making a serious effort to inculcate the first principles of snowcraft. We recognize these very sound endeavours and have nothing but praise for their authors.

The 'Examination Paper on Snowcraft and Mountaineering' (pp. 97-107) is full of interesting conundrums, and we are quite sure that—on paper—we should have failed to reply satisfactorily and would have been ploughed ignominiously!

'The First Complete Ski Traverse of Mont Blanc in Winter' (pp. 114-6)—Mr. Lunn appears justly sceptical as to the claim—is published, presumably, as a warning. No more criminal expedition has ever been described in history or fiction. Weather, conditions, snow—everything, in fact—was of the very worst. It is difficult to say how long the expedition—of which, needless to say, only a minimum was accomplished on ski—may be considered to have lasted. It appears to have begun, from the Requin hut, about April 4, terminating in Chamonix somewhere about the 16th. Death should have interfered early on April 4.

Mr. Lunn is becoming the historian of 'winter' climbing, but what are the time-limits for such expeditions? Mr. Coolidge, speaking *ex cathedra*, once defined to us that a 'winter' climb is accomplished between November 15 and March 31. THE DEFINITION SHOULD STAND. Before and after these dates the *temperatures*, under favourable conditions, cease to be wintry, while daylight in April is as long as in September. There were many expeditions accomplished last July and August under winter 'conditions,' while we ourselves have seen summer 'conditions'—at over 13,000 ft.—in February.

Again, while on the subject of the 'history' of winter climbing, let us point out to Mr. Lunn that it is absurdly meticulous, and probably impossible, to differentiate between (i) the 'first winter ascent of Mont Blanc'; (ii) the 'first winter ascent of Mont Blanc on ski.' What possible interest is there in the 'first traverse' of the Drus on *Kletterschuhen* or of the Marmolada on *tricounis*? Ski or raquettes, nails or crampons, rope-shoes or rubbers—they are all the means to the same end.

Mr. Lunn is always a pleasantly *exalté* and sometimes a quite humorous writer since (p. 237) we read that '... very few British runners take guides on full day tours and the majority might fairly be described as guideless mountaineers [*sic*], for *mountaineering in winter begins when one puts on one's ski*.'¹ Quite so; then in summer mountaineering begins when one puts on one's boots; while in winter the streets of St. Moritz, Davos and other fashionable resorts are full of 'guideless mountaineers' all struggling to maintain their equilibrium on frozen mud or paper-strewn ice. It is true that Mr. Lunn qualifies his remarkable statement with the alarming reason that 'an avalanche may overwhelm one within one hundred yards of the hotel'! Well, even should this phenomenon occur, the victims would not be described, necessarily, as mountaineers.

The Annual is peculiar in publishing a kind of biography of living mountaineers or ski-runners. It is news (p. 128) that Dr. W.

¹ Our *italics*.

Paulcke (born 1873), 'with Zsigmondy, produced the classic book ² *Die Gefahren der Alpen*'—published in 1885, the year of Emil Zsigmondy's tragic death.

Mr. Lunn is a martyr to his proof-readers. The number of misspelt place-names is so great that it amounts to a veritable epidemic. However, we repeat, the Annual is well worth its moderate cost to any ski-runner.

Derniers Souvenirs de l'Alpe. By Julien Gallet. Pp. 207. Librairie Payot, Lausanne, 1927.

THIS book, a sequel to '*Dans l'Alpe ignorée*,' requires no review. We will content ourselves with stating that, like its predecessor, it is one of the most delightful we have ever read and should be in everyone's library. We can only trust that the title does not imply the retirement of the gifted author either from active service or from the field of literature.

The book is divided into three parts, and only in the first and shortest do we find the story of peaks and valleys generally known. There is possibly no mountaineer now living who can say honestly that he knows even a tithe of the glens and mountains described in Part II. All the descriptions are of surpassing interest. The French is classical, the style picturesque yet simple, the tales reminiscent of 'Below the Snow Line.' Where all is so good, it is hard to come across any single portion which we might prefer to another. Yet in reading Part III we find one chapter unique, fortunately, in Alpine literature: 'En Tarentaise durant la Mobilisation.' This is the most remarkable part, in our humble opinion, of the entire work. The note of coming tragedy, sternly repressed, creeps through the narrative. The actors, men and women of the Chasseurs Alpains, float across the stage for an instant before becoming submerged in the cataclysm of mobilization and war. It is pleasant to read of the kindness shown by our Allies, the mountaineers of Val d'Isère, to three stray Swiss, the author, his wife and Philippe Allamand. Their local guide, Cyprien Mattis, destined to perish near Arras two months later, conducts them to Bourg St. Maurice on his last day at home. At Albertville '... tout à coup un réserviste, un homme de superbe prestance, s'avance vers nous: "Eh! les Suisses, pourquoi si tristes? Bonjour, Philippe. Comment ça va depuis notre campagne à Zermatt?" Tiens! le fameux guide Blanc, dit le Pape, de Bonneval. . . . Quand nous lui disons notre crainte de la Suisse envahie, cet homme se redresse, frappe d'un grand coup sa large poitrine et s'écrie: "Eh bien! dites vous qu'il y a encore du monde en France."'

² A mediocre work steadily deteriorating with each successive edition. Dr. Paulcke took on the editorship of the 4th Edition, 1908.

Enough. The author and his family take the (somewhat irregular) advice of Caporal Pierre Blanc, and, with some difficulty, reach their uninvaded country.

We will quote nor praise no more. It is a work which all lovers of the Alps must possess.

The Structure of the Alps. By Léon W. Collet. xii + 289 pages, with 12 Plates, 63 Diagrammatic Figures, Bibliographies, and Index. Edward Arnold & Co., London. 1927. Price 15s.

By the Professor of Geology and Palæontology in the University of Geneva, this volume is the only recent publication in the English language dealing with the Structure of the Alps. It should prove of value not only to the student but also to the general reader. The story of the Alps as unfolded in this book has only been written through the achievements of a brilliant group of investigators to whom Professor Collet makes reference, as synthesized by Staub and elucidated by the genius of Argand. When it is borne in mind that the season during which the high regions of the Alps are accessible is extremely short, and that many of the clues to the tectonic puzzle lie high up in the face of almost inaccessible precipices, one cannot but marvel at the progress that has been made in the last quarter of a century in the interpretation of the problems.

It is stated explicitly that the results have been obtained independently of Wegener's hypothesis, but are a great support to it. It is concluded that a southern continent (Africa or Gondwanaland) is separated from a northern continent (Europe or Eurasia) by a geosyncline of the Trias Mediterranean (Tethys of Suess). As a result of the northward drifting of the southern continent, the sea floor was folded (geanticlines) northwards, forming the Alps. The southern continent not only encountered the obstacles formed by the northern continent, but its frontal part was thrust over it. The two gigantic geanticlines, which modified the original simplicity of the inter-continental geosyncline, developed into the primitive Pennine nappes (recumbent anticlines in which the reversed limb has partially disappeared through stretching) of Great St. Bernard and Dent Blanche. These set in motion the Simplon and Monte Rosa assemblages, while their forward drive originated the folding of the High Calcareous Alps north of the Rhône. In contrast, the Mont Blanc massif is a granite batholith. The Western Alps, therefore, provide the key to the history of the range. It may be deduced that the Eastern Alps are a gigantic overlap, overriding the Western Alps.

The plates, diagrams, and summarizing bibliographies at the end of each chapter are admirably calculated to facilitate the study of many technical points and add to the uniform excellence of this work.

J. M. T.

Vette: Ricordi di Esplorazioni e Nuove Ascensioni Sulle Alpi, nei Gruppi del Monte Rosa, del Cervino e del Monte Bianco dal 1896 al 1921. By G. F. e G. B. Gugliermina e Giuseppe Lampugnani, with 58 full plates. Price L. 130, post free, from Signor G. F. Gugliermina, Borgosesia, Prov. di Vercelli, Italy.

ONE has to go back to Mr. Freshfield's monumental work on the Caucasus, with its unsurpassable Sella plates, to find anything to compare with the present superb volume.

The authors, the brothers Gugliermina and Colonel Lampugnani,¹ were well-known climbers already at a date when the mountains were not so familiar as they are to-day. Much of their work was new and in nearly every case they relied on their own efforts and dispensed with any professional assistance. They consequently learned the craft thoroughly and have well earned their unsurpassed reputation.

Their expeditions rank among the boldest of the last 30 years and were carried out with such preparation and consummate mastery that no accident of any kind befell them. Their papers in the *Bollettino* and the *Rivista*, as well as in this JOURNAL, exhibit a thorough study of their subject, and, particularly in the Mont Blanc and Monte Rosa ranges, place mountaineers under a debt of gratitude.

The present volume must obviously rely to some extent on their earlier papers, but it is an advantage to have them reproduced in this magnificent volume at a price hardly exceeding one-third of that of an English book of its class.

The expeditions so carefully described and, one might say, so incomparably illustrated, are all of the very highest class. There can be no party able to show anything to surpass them.

Naturally most of the Monte Rosa expeditions were made from the Valsesia side where these explorers dwell. They include first ascents of the Punta Gnifetti,² Punta Parrot and Punta Giordani by the E. arête. On the latter I had, from the Col Sesia route, the opportunity of watching them at work.

Their arduous work in the Mont Blanc range is of even greater technical merit, including as it does ascents of Mont Blanc by the Brouillard and Innominata arêtes,³ of the Verte from the Nant-Blanc glacier, of passages of the Col de l'Aiguille Verte—first

¹ See the portrait group *A.J.* 33, 135. In some of their later expeditions Signor F. Ravelli, to-day one of the foremost mountaineers, took a leading part.

² *A.J.* 28, 82.

³ On this ascent they were preceded by a few days by MM. Courtauld and Oliver, with the brothers Rey, and the Zermatt guide Adolf Aufdenblatten. The line to be followed was settled beforehand by the two climbers and Aufdenblatten, after careful inspection from the Innominata. Aufdenblatten led practically throughout.

repeated in 1926 by the well-known G.H.M. members, MM. J. de Lépiney and Jacques Lagarde—and of the Col Maudit.

Probably, however, the expedition which exhibits their qualities at their zenith was the ascent of the Aiguille Blanche from the Fresnay side. Success only followed two determined attempts, one by the great couloir on the Brenva side between l'Isolée and the Aig. Blanche, when a blizzard of snow compelled them first to bivouac and then to descend, *during the night*, the same couloir, continually swept by light avalanches.² Episodes like this bring out the inwardness of men!

As to the illustrations, they are, one and all, a dream of delight, whether as pure studies or for their great topographical value. One must mention the exquisite contrasts in 'Sole morente sul Monte Rosa,' p. 64; 'Fletschhorn,' p. 144; 'Cervino,' p. 168; 'M. Blanc from Innominata,' p. 244; 'Col de l'Aig. Verte,' p. 262. The 'Aiguille Noire,' p. 346, a superb Turner effect in black and white, is of its kind the most appealing to one's memory of similar scenes, while on p. 254 a weirdly ethereal picture of a glacier tunnel I have never seen equalled.

The whole work is a fitting monument to the careers of three men who will go down in Alpine history as great masters.

The mountains have been too run over and familiarized the last few years for us to expect the recurrence of like opportunities in like conditions.

J. P. F.

Among the Alps with Bradford. By Bradford Washburn. Pp. 160. Illustrated. Putnam, 1927.

THIS little book by a seventeen-year-old American is excellent in every respect, save the title. The very pleasant narrative describes a combined Charmoz-Grépon traverse by the writer, his brother and their guides, together with a cinema operator; the original (Whymper) ascent of the Matterhorn; lastly, an attempt on Mont Blanc under the most wintry and dangerous conditions.

Of the first expedition, it will be sufficient to say that it is about the best and most life-like description that we have had the pleasure to read. There are many most excellent illustrations to it, and, of these the best seemed to us to be, the 'Mummery crack,' 'Râteau de Chèvre,' the 'last two cracks in the Grépon,' and 'C.P.' We were much amused at a new name that Mr. Washburn has invented for *Kletterschuhen*, or crêpe-soled rubbers—'Sneakers'! It seems very appropriate. The *rappel* shown on one of the Charmoz photographs is not the right way to employ it, and most people, including Mummery, have found the portion of his crack immediately above the 'platform' to be the hardest—but that is, of course, a matter for the individual concerned.

We ourselves saw the N. peak of the Grépon scaled in a few minutes, without any rope-throwing, by Josef Pollinger in his *boots*,

no less than a quarter of a century ago. Georges Couttet was certainly *not* the first man to accomplish the feat, but it is a method not to be recommended!

As regards the Matterhorn, the account is taken largely from 'Scrambles'—of course. There are some errors: Croz and not 'old' Peter Taugwalder (Douglas's guide) was Whymper's former guide and 'friend.' The party during the ascent did not, most certainly, move at 'terrific' and 'break-neck' speed between the bivouac and the Shoulder. The accident did not take place on the Shoulder where marked in the photograph, but several hundred feet above. Lord Francis Douglas is inevitably described as 'Lord Douglas' and the fog-bow illustration is a failure. These are small blemishes in an otherwise most readable account and it strikes us that the comment . . . 'Hudson and Douglas as well as Whymper were all well-trained in climbing, but Mr. Hadow was not quite so skilled as the rest,' is very shrewdly and gracefully put.

As for Mont Blanc, it appears to have been an exceedingly wintry attempt and the party was hampered by ski. All young climbers break out of barracks, on occasion.

In conclusion, the book will give pleasure to young and old alike; we congratulate the youthful author very cordially, both on his work and the manner of his scrambling. Mr. Washburn is reported to have stated that 'on the attainment of twenty-one years, he will be waiting on the doorstep of the Alpine Club.' That door will open speedily in 'Welcome.'

CORRESPONDENCE.

A DEFENCE OF SKI RUNNERS.

To the Editor of the ALPINE JOURNAL.

DEAR SIR,—I should be glad if you would allow me, in the absence from England of the President of the Alpine Ski Club, to correct a statement in your last issue. Mr. Unna criticizes the Alpine Ski Club proposal form in the following terms:

'He understands the utility of ski, but dislikes the undue importance attached to third-class tests, competitions and downhill running. Even the Alpine Ski Club, which was formed "to promote mountaineering on ski" is not blameless in this respect. "The Proposer should submit his own impressions, based on personal

observation, of the candidate's ski-ing, his speed, control, his mastery of the turns, and his powers of endurance." What about his mountaineering ?'

The Alpine Ski Club proposal form was originally modelled on the Alpine Club proposal form, and demanded nothing more than a list of expeditions without putting any questions as to the candidate's mountaineering ability. The only additional details asked for were the names of the candidate's companions on guideless expeditions. Here, too, the Alpine Club precedent was followed.

As, however, speed on ski may mean the difference between safety and danger when a winter mountaineering party is threatened by storm or by night, it was subsequently decided to insist on a minimum standard of speed and steadiness. The modern proposal form, which was discussed more than two years ago, and which was finally adopted a few months before Mr. Unna's letter appeared in your columns, contains the following requirements :

'The Proposer must satisfy the Committee that the candidate : (a) possesses the necessary endurance for long tours, (b) has a sound knowledge of snowcraft and avalanche craft, (c) would prove a reliable companion in the High Alps, (d) could be relied on to lead any ordinary full-day ski expedition, (e) is a strong and steady ski-runner, and can maintain a fair average touring speed on long expeditions. It is desirable that the Proposer shall have skied with the candidate, but the Committee may dispense with this requirement if satisfactory evidence is forthcoming as to the candidate's mountain craft and ski technique.'

I enclose a copy of the form.

Yours faithfully,

CHARLES HORDERN, Lt.-Colonel, R.E.

*Vice-President,
Alpine Ski Club.*

ARMY AND NAVY CLUB, S.W. 1.
February, 1928.

To the Editor of the ALPINE JOURNAL.

SIR,—Recent suggestions that a schism exists between the Alpine Club and ski-runners has prompted this letter which I am writing, not only as a member of the Alpine Club, but of the Alpine Ski Club as well.

It is much to be regretted that any suggestions as to lack of cordiality should have been made, and one cannot but feel that these are due to misunderstandings and misstatements on both sides.

Ski-ing and mountaineering possess several things in common, of which the greatest is that they both share the same playground.

On this account there is no reason why the most cordial relations should not exist as between other sports. No one can deny that ski-racing brings out and develops some exceptionally fine qualities such as quick decision, strength, skill, nerve, and team spirit, and the 'pot-hunting' instinct exists no more than in any other of our national sports of which we are justly proud.

The statement has been made that the average ski-runner knows more of snowcraft than the average mountaineer. If the 'average mountaineer' is the man who only climbs in summer this cannot be gainsaid, as conditions of snow prevail in winter that are not seen in summer. Undeniably a greater knowledge of snow conditions is required in winter than in summer, and it is due to ski that the knowledge of the peculiar snow conditions in winter has advanced to such a marked extent.

The sole object of ski, from the mountaineering point of view, is to what effect they can be used as an aid to mountaineering. Some years ago I gave Canadian show-shoes a trial, but I eventually came to the conclusion that there is no place where a man can go on them where an experienced ski-runner cannot go with greater speed and pleasure, with the possible exception of dense forest. Yet there are undoubtedly places where snow-shoes, by reason of their lightness and portability, would be of greater service than ski, such as mountains where ski must be carried for great distances over difficult ground and worn only on short stretches. The traverse of Mont Blanc from the Col du Midi and the N.E. face of the Jungfrau are cases in point. To describe these as ski-traverses, as has been done when ski have had to be carried for many hours on end, is absurd, for the additional weight of ski cannot but slow down and exhaust the party. It is useless claims such as these that have rendered mountaineers suspicious of ski-runners. Again, on mountains like Monte Rosa and the Finsteraarhorn ski are preferable to show-shoes. The reason why ski were not worn on the Mt. Logan expedition is probably due to not all the party being experienced in their use and also to the fact that it is difficult to haul heavy sledges on ski.

Mr. Unna has stated that 'ascent on ski requires the minimum of skill in ski-ing. Descent requires no more mountaineering knowledge than the ascent. A quite indifferent performer on ski can descend as safely as the most skilful provided that his mountaineering sense suffices.'

The suitability of ski as an aid to mountaineering depends on the skill with which they are used, and no one, however expert a mountaineer he may be, can hope to find in ski an aid to climbing until he has acquired a very definite degree of ski-ing technique. That is the reason why a certain degree of technique is insisted on as a portion of the qualification for membership of the Alpine Ski Club. A slow man downhill, or one who cannot manage his swings, is a menace to any party on a long winter expedition and may cause

the party to be benighted. I speak from personal experience. As in mountaineering, the watchword is speed, speed, and yet more speed, and this speed can only be gained by exercising skill, skill, and yet more skill. In bad weather, or down an unknown ice-fall or complicated mountainside, a very definite degree of mountaineering skill is essential, so that the definition that mountaineering only begins when ski are abandoned is not perhaps accurate. It would be better to say 'only another stage of mountaineering.' Fighting down a broken glacier in a winter blizzard calls for greater qualities than the ascent of a great peak in perfect summer weather.

Under good snow conditions it is possible in winter to reach the Hugi Sattel on the Finsteraarhorn entirely on ski, and it would be difficult to say that this is not a mountaineering expedition. Unquestionably high expeditions entirely on ski call for a degree of mountaineering experience, but do not constitute more than a portion of the craft of mountaineering. It is unwise to dogmatize on any subject connected with mountains, which are themselves the least dogmatic form of nature.

Mr. Unna has also made a statement to the effect that ski-runners follow tracks and that 'the indelibility of ski tracks tends to prevent a long qualification list of ski-ing expeditions from proving any mountaineering qualification whatsoever.' The ski-runner's obvious retort is that in summer a long list of mountaineering expeditions gained by following tracks, other parties, or the directions of guide-books does not prove any mountaineering qualification. It should be remembered that someone has had to make these tracks in the first place. The immunity of British ski-runners from accident is mainly due to the lack of ski expeditions among the High Alps and to the efforts being made to educate ski-runners in the detection of avalanchy snow. As to the indelibility of ski tracks, this cannot be said to apply to the High Alps, where I have frequently seen deep tracks completely obliterated by a *tourmente* within five minutes of being made.

It is hoped in the future that British ski-mountaineering will be raised to a high level, and the Alpine Ski Club looks to the Alpine Club for sympathy in this task. At the same time, let it not be forgotten that many of those who are only just learning the craft on the 'nursery' slopes of the winter Alps have the true mountaineering instinct within them. My experience of ski-runners has led me to believe that they have just as keen an appreciation of the Alps as have mountaineers, and it is greatly to be hoped that this common bond of the mountains will promote an understanding which will serve in the future to closely link the joys of ski-ing with those of mountaineering.

I am, etc.,
F. S. SMYTHE.

ALPINE CLUB,
March 22, 1928.

[We publish Colonel Hordern's letter with pleasure, but would point out that Mr. Unna's letter was written in reply to Mr. Lunn's of July 4, 1927, and *before* any change in the qualification for membership of the Alpine Ski Club had been made public.

With reference to Mr. Smythe's letter, it might be indicated that Mountaineering is practically the only sport or pastime still free from 'pots' or prizes. This is not the least of its charms.

Mr. Smythe states that 'conditions of snow prevail in winter that are not seen in summer.' This is perfectly true; so is the apposite.

As to the 'efforts being made to educate ski-runners in the detection of avalanchy snow,' well, such 'efforts' were never more terribly needed than at the present moment.

The correspondence must now be considered as 'closed.'—*Editor* 'A.J.']

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ALPINE CLUB.

A GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the Hall, 23 Savile Row, London, W. 1, on Tuesday, November 1, 1927, at 8.30 P.M., Sir George H. Morse, *President*, in the Chair.

The following candidates were balloted for and elected Members of the Club, namely, the Rev. William Albert Edward Ball, Mr. Herbert Somerset Bullock (Member 1897–1921), Mr. Douglas Laird Busk, Mr. Graham Scudamore Percival Heywood, Mr. Richard Kay, Mr. Robert Peel Mears, Mr. Philip Harold Pilditch, Mr. Denis Fielden Pilkington, Mr. Charles Robertson Porter, and Mr. Arthur Walker Russell.

The PRESIDENT announced with regret the deaths of the following Members: Eliot Howard, elected 1867; Alexander Mortimer, elected 1867; Col. J. W. A. Michell, elected 1882; W. M. Spence, elected 1891; Philip Fletcher, elected 1892; Alfred Barran, elected 1897; Major H. D. Minchinton, elected 1909; Philip S. Minor, elected 1911; and Raymond P. Bicknell, elected 1911.

Mr. H. E. L. PORTER read a Paper entitled 'Mt. Tasman and its Satellites,' which was illustrated with lantern slides. Mr. Claude A. Macdonald and the Rev. Canon H. E. Newton took part in the ensuing discussion and the proceedings ended with the passing of a cordial vote of thanks to Mr. Porter. The slides shown were undoubtedly the finest ever seen at the Club.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the Hall, 23 Savile Row, London, W. 1, on Monday, December 12, 1927, at 8.30 P.M., Sir George H. Morse, *President*, in the Chair.

The following candidates were balloted for and elected Members of the Club, namely, Mr. Clement Hugh Archer, Major John Eastman Blow, M.C., R.E., Mr. William Villiers Brown, Mr. Saburo Matsukata, Mr. William McEwan Younger.

The PRESIDENT, in accordance with the provisions of Rule 29, there being no other candidates, declared the following members nominated by the Committee to be duly elected as Officers of the Club and Members of Committee for the year 1928 :

As Vice-President.—Mr. E. H. F. Bradby in the place of the late Mr. R. P. Bicknell.

As Members of Committee.—Messrs. A. F. de Fonblanque, R. S. Low, E. F. Pilkington and W. M. Roberts in the places of Messrs. H. L. R. Dent, R. Graham, C. E. Montague and H. E. L. Porter, whose terms of office expire.

The President, Sir George H. Morse, the Vice-President, Dr. Tom G. Longstaff, the Honorary Secretary, Mr. Sydney Spencer, and the others Members of Committee, being eligible, were re-elected.

Mr. R. S. MORRISH proposed that Mr. J. C. Gait and Mr. J. W. Brown be appointed Auditors to audit the Club Accounts for 1927. This was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

A proposed alteration in Rule 40 was rejected by the Members present.

The PRESIDENT announced with regret the deaths of Mr. Robertson Lamb, elected in 1917 ; the Rev. C. G. Monro, elected in 1892 ; Mr. A. L. Mumm, elected in 1899 ; and Alfred Simond, the well-known Chamonix Guide, who was for many years *hôte* at Montanvers.

A very cordial vote of thanks to the HONORARY SECRETARY, Mr. Sydney Spencer, for his work in arranging the Exhibition of Photographs was duly passed with acclamation.

The PRESIDENT announced that the Committee had unanimously agreed to elect Monsieur le Docteur Henri Faes, President of the Swiss Alpine Club, an Honorary Member of the Alpine Club, and that it would be his pleasure to inform Dr. Faes of his election when he entered the Hall. This was done, Dr. Faes being greeted with great cordiality by the Members present. Dr. Faes received from the President the badge of the Club.

Mr. R. OGIER WARD then read a Paper entitled 'The Col de la Brenva : The Aiguille de Leschaux,' which was illustrated by lantern slides.

Mr. George Yeld and Dr. Claude Wilson took part in the subsequent discussion, and the proceedings closed with the passing of a vote of thanks to the reader of the Paper.

An Exhibition of Alpine Photographs was held in the Hall of the Club from Monday, December 12, to Saturday, December 31, 1927, and in connection with this an 'At Home' was held on Tuesday, December 13, when some 450 people—Members and their friends—attended.

THE ANNUAL WINTER DINNER was held in the Edward VII Rooms, Hotel Victoria, London, W.C. 2, on Tuesday, December 13, 1927, at 7 P.M., Sir George H. Morse, *President*, in the Chair. There were present 252 Members and guests, amongst the latter being His Excellency the Japanese Ambassador, Monsieur le Docteur Henri Faes, President of the Swiss Alpine Club, Dr. Gay of Lausanne, Lieut.-Gen. Sir Webb Gillman, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O., Col. Sir Charles Close, K.B.E., C.B., C.M.G., F.R.S., R.E., President of the Royal Geographical Society, and the Hon. Mr. Justice Rowlatt, K.C.S.I.

A GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the Hall, 23 Savile Row, London, W. 1, on Tuesday, February 7, 1928, at 8.30 P.M., Sir George H. Morse, *President*, in the Chair.

The following candidates were balloted for and elected Members of the Club, namely, Messrs. John Francis Huntington, Charles Scott Lindsay, John Lawrence Longland, Ian Samuel Osborn, Seymour James Price, Robert L. M. Underhill, and Lawrence Rickard Wager.

The PRESIDENT announced with regret the deaths of Mr. J. H. Wainewright, elected in 1875, and the Rev. F. C. Bainbridge-Bell, elected in 1889.

Mr. F. S. SMYTHE read a Paper entitled 'The First Ascent of Mont Blanc direct from the Brenva Glacier, and other Climbs in 1927,' which was illustrated by lantern slides.

Professor T. Graham Brown, Mr. R. W. Lloyd, and Professor J. Norman Collie contributed to the subsequent discussion, and the President remarked that it was a source of pride and gratification to the older members of the Club that such skilful mountaineering is carried on by younger members. The reader of the Paper was accorded an enthusiastic vote of thanks.

A GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the Hall, 23 Savile Row, London, W. 1, on Tuesday, March 6, 1928, at 8.30 P.M., Sir George H. Morse, *President*, in the Chair.

Mr. Arthur Hackett was balloted for and elected a Member of the Club.

The HONORARY SECRETARY and TREASURER, Mr. Sydney Spencer, presented the Accounts for 1927, which were duly adopted, *nem. con.*

A cordial vote of thanks to the Auditors was passed.

Dr. TOM G. LONGSTAFF read a Paper entitled 'Round about Nanda Devi,' which was illustrated by lantern slides.

Brig.-Gen. the Hon. C. G. BRUCE contributed to the discussion which followed, and the proceedings terminated with the passing of a vote of thanks to the reader of the Paper.

A GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the Hall, 23 Savile Row, London, W. 1, on Tuesday, April 3, 1928, at 8.30 P.M., Sir George H. Morse, *President*, in the Chair.

The PRESIDENT referred to the deaths of Mr. Wilberforce N. Tribe, elected in 1891, and Mr. G. H. Neame, elected in 1903.

A cordial vote of thanks to Mr. Sydney Spencer, the Honorary Secretary, and Mr. R. W. Brant who assisted him, for their work in arranging the Exhibition of Alpine Paintings was carried with acclamation.

Mr. EDGAR FOA read a Paper entitled 'The new Frontiers in the Alps,' which was illustrated by lantern slides.

The members expressed their appreciation in a cordial vote of thanks.

[Owing to pressure on our space, '*The Alpine Club Library*' has had to be held up till our next number.—Editor, 'A.J.']

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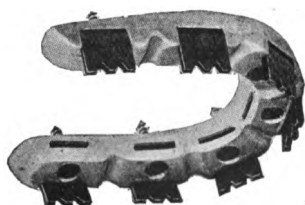
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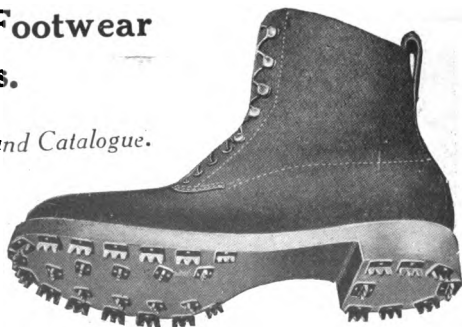
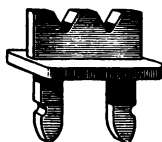
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